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Turbulent Times in the Chess World

By GM Aleksandar Colovic; Photo: David Llada

They say sport should stay out of politics, but that is pretty much impossible. With chess, politics started to influence the game with the emergence of the Soviet Union's players as the dominant ones. The Soviets openly stated that they used chess for their image as a 'smartest nation' and were not shy to exercise the power their dominance allowed.

In today's chess world, politics is still heavily involved in everything that happens. This has been emphasised to the maximum with the war in Ukraine where a lot of factors affected a lot of decisions.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

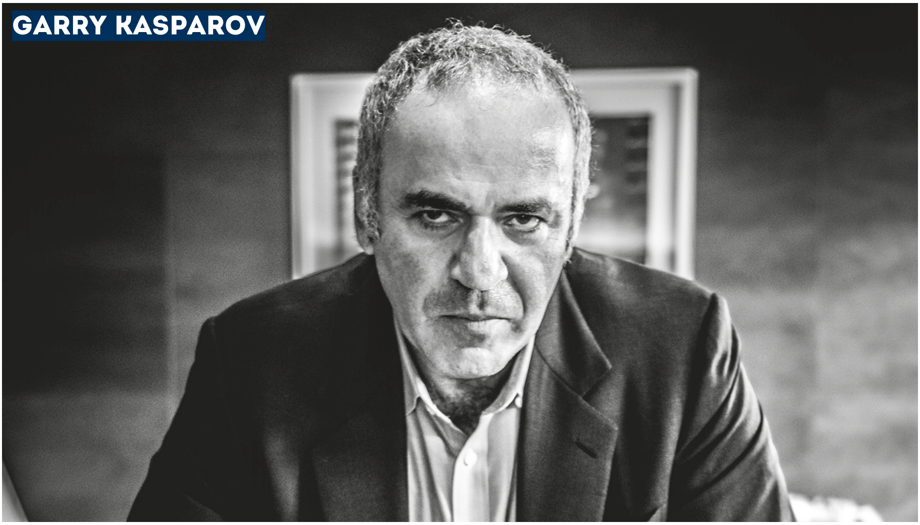
Many sports federations banned Russian and Belarus players after the invasion in Ukraine. Chess was reluctant to do so, with FIDE and ECU opting for a more subtle approach - a player changing the federation, or opting to play under the FIDE flag, could still play in tournaments.

The reason for this approach was obvious - the majority of the best chess players are Russian and banning them altogether robs the chess world of their contribution to the game. While this remains a sticky point, moving towards the leadership of FIDE we see an even more complicated situation.

Current FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich has served as Russian Deputy Prime Minister for six years (2012-2018) and has been an Assistant to President Putin for four years (2008-2012). A high-raking official, he has occupied important positions in the Russian state hierarchy with inevitable close ties to those in power. Therefore, it was not surprising that there were cries for his removal as FIDE President once the war started, but it was surprising that these voices practically died out, barring the consistent petitions coming from Ukrainian players.

In contrast to most sports, chess again showed it is special. While others brutally

ARKADY DVORKOVICH



removed everything that is connected with Russia, chess treaded lightly. Dvorkovich has been recognised by many to be the best FIDE President in history, so people are willing to oversee the fact that he is a Russian who gives prominence and recognition to Russia by remaining on its post in a situation where the world tries its best to squash it.

Dvorkovich himself seems to be in a precarious position. He gave an interview to western media condemning the war, only to be called a "national traitor" in his home country and to follow up with an interview to Russian media supporting Russia. Soon after these interviews he was removed from the post of President of the Skolkovo Fund, Russia's biggest innovation centre.

In the current situation he seems to try to maintain the impossible stance to conform the politics of his country and the need for independence and fairness as FIDE President. Walking a tight rope for too long usually leads to one outcome, but at this point nobody can really say how it will all end.

Dvorkovich is not on the list of sanctioned individuals (like Karpov, for example) and he boldly announced that he will run for a second term in the Presidential Elections that will take place in August during the Olympiad in Chennai. If sanctions on him are imposed, the chess world will find itself in the same situation like in 2015, when the FIDE President of that time, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, was sanctioned for his close ties to Syria and FIDE's accounts were frozen.

Another surprising aspect of the upcoming elections is that so far there has been no counter-candidate to Dvorkovich. I wonder where those voices who call for his removal are when they have a chance to fight his re-election legally? Why isn't 'the free world' looking for and supporting a non-Russian candidate to challenge Dvorkovich?

As things stand, unless sanctioned, Dvorkovich will be re-elected in Chennai.

BUSINESS

This leads us to the next question - who will want to deal with an international organisation that is led by a Russian? The western world is hitting Russia with unprecedented sanctions so dealing with Russian-led FIDE can be seen as a double standard by many.

MAGNUS CARLSEN
chess
ARCTIC
simonsen

FIDE swiftly broke ties with a lot of Russian sponsor companies after the beginning of the war. They proudly stated that their finances do not depend on them and during Dvorkovich's tenure FIDE indeed expanded towards the West when it came to sponsorship and business agreements.

And yet, business is business. In April FIDE announced a long-term cooperation with the Scheinberg family (of PokerStars fame) that will see them sponsor one major FIDE event every year until 2026. The upcoming Candidates is another event that they will sponsor, as is next year's Grand Swiss - again to be organised on the Isle of Man.

More business was announced after FIDE's Council Meeting in Abu Dhabi at the end of April. FIDE agreed to grant two spots in the 2024 and 2026 Candidates tournament to the top two finishers of the Grand Chess Tour. At the time of writing the details are still to be made known, but this agreement raises many questions, the most obvious one being why two spots are granted to a tour where the participants are hand-picked by the organisers without any qualification process (a reminder that the idea of the GCT originated by Garry Kasparov and he still has a big say who gets to play in it).

It has to be noted that frequent changes of the qualification to the Candidates (first the removal of the rating spot, now introduction of two spots from a new qualification event) are a far cry from FIDE's promise of a stable cycle. I won't even mention the women's World Championship cycle (a big unknown at the time of writing, with no dates for the Candidates tournament), which was planned to be the same, with the same qualification tournaments and number of spots leading to the Candidates - with no women GCT this is now impossible. *Quo vadis*, FIDE?

WILL CARLSEN PLAY ANOTHER MATCH?

Carlsen is famous for saying that he won't play another match, but so far he has always changed his mind. Will this time be different?

> *The chess world, just like the real world, is in total chaos without a clear direction or vision. Anything can happen, and it probably will*

ANDREY FILATOV

Andrey Filatov,
President of the Russian Chess Federation

In a recent interview to Norwegian media he reiterated that while he may change his mind again, for now he is still of the opinion that he will not play. He added that he will follow the Candidates and upon knowing the winner will make his decision.

As if there wasn't enough uncertainty in the chess world so Carlsen added his share. Imagine the mess that would ensue if he decided not to play. In that case we would have a World Championship match between the winner of the Candidates and the runner-up and a situation where the status of the World Champion will be severely undermined, with resemblance to the post-1993 period when Kasparov was the undisputed number one on the rating list but Karpov was the (FIDE) World Champion. Good old days.

EUROPE, ASIA, OR BOTH?

The sanctions on Russia mean that business is not as usual for their chess federation. With the path to the west firmly closed, the Russian Chess Federation had no choice but to turn to the east. In a desperate attempt, they decided to exit the European Chess Union and apply to be accepted in the Asian Federation.

Sanctioned former World Champion Anatoly Karpov didn't vote for the exit, but neither did he vote against (and even didn't sustain!). He did say however that Russia and Turkey, due to their geography, can be part of both European Chess Union and the Asian Federation at the same time.

This 'strategic decision', as it was called by the coach of the Russian youth national team GM Mikhail Kobalia, feels more like a forced decision. Kobalia himself admitted that Russian players won't be able to play in Europe in the foreseeable future. So while it may appear as a saving possibility for Russian chess, the decision is not one-sided.

It is actually up for the Asian Federation to decide whether they want to accept the Russian application. They have a congress in December when the voting will take place.

The big question is whether Asia wants Russians to participate in their events. In case of a positive answer the shift of powers towards Asia will be significant. In case of a negative answer, the Russian Federation and players will be isolated with a bleak future ahead.

It is curious that the Asian Federation was supposed to have their congress in April, but they postponed it to December. Wise buying of time?

EMIL SUTOVSKY AND SERGEY KRJAKIN

PRANKS

After receiving a ban for six months for his rhetoric in support of Russia's war by FIDE's Ethics Commission, Sergey Karjakin played a risky move.

Two friends of his set up a fake call with FIDE Director General Emil Sutovsky, posing as the Ukrainian Minister of Sport. In the 'interview' they provoked Sutovsky to say several things openly: that he was the first to suggest Karjakin's ban, that in his opinion six months was too short and that if Karjakin is allowed to play he will resign from his post. Sutovsky also gave unflattering descriptions to some high-ranking Russian officials and businessmen. If you are interested in more details, you can find the video of the call with English subtitles on YouTube. Sutovsky took to Twitter to call the prank Karjakin's new low, while Karjakin gleefully enjoyed the success of his risky move.

It is difficult to see Karjakin return to chess after everything he's done, so Sutovsky's post is safe (until the elections and likely after them, too). Still, it is probably a good idea for FIDE officials to be a bit less enthusiastic when it comes to interviews with unconfirmed collocutors.

CONCLUSION

There is only one conclusion that can be drawn from the *omnium-gatherum* above. The chess world, just like the real world, is in total chaos without a clear direction or vision. Anything can happen, and it probably will.

REYKJAVIK OPEN, 6-12 APRIL 2022

A VICTORY FOR PRAGGNANANDHAA AND A SOLID PERFORMANCE BY BRITISH PLAYERS

By IM Shaun Taulbut

This popular event was won by young Indian grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa outright with 7.5/9.

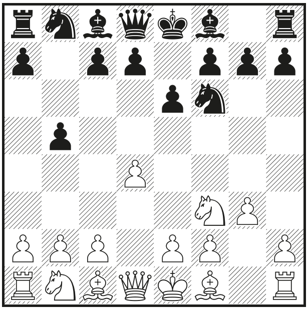
Several British Players competed with Brandon Clarke faring best with 6.5/9 and Jonah Willow with 6/9. On 5.5/9 were Harry Grieve, Nigel Povah, Peter Large and Simon Williams. On 5/9 were Peter Sowray, Stephen Dishman and Terry Chapman.

Here are some of the games from the tournament.

Dietmar **Kolbus** - Rameshbabu **Praggnanandhaa**

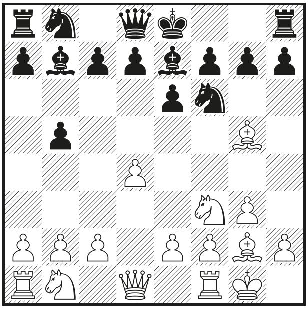
Kvika Reykjavik Open 2022 Reykjavik ISL (3.9)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.g3 b5



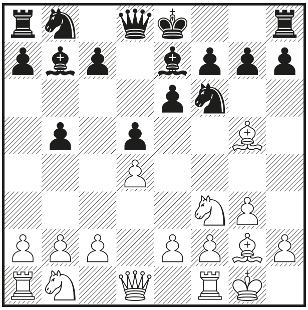
Black gains space on the queenside at the cost of an exposed pawn on b5.

4.♗g2 ♗b7 5.0-0 ♗e7 6.♗g5



White has in mind swapping the knight on f6 giving White more control of the light squares.

6...d5



Black decides to stop White playing for e4

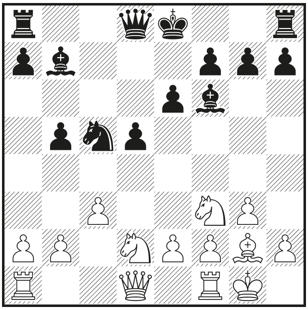
7.♗xf6 7.♕d3 a6 8.a4 b4 9.c4 bxc3 10.bxc3.

7...♗xf6 8.c3 8.♕d3 c6 9.♘bd2 0-0 is slightly better for White.

8...♘d7 9.♘bd2 9.a4 a6 10.♘a3 c6 keeps control of the queenside light squares.

9...c5 Black takes the opportunity to play actively.

10.dxc5 ♘xc5

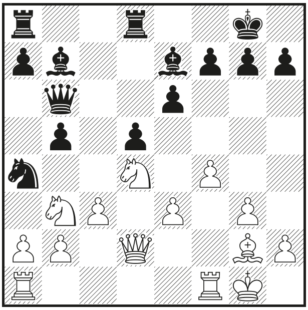


Black's active knight gives him the advantage.

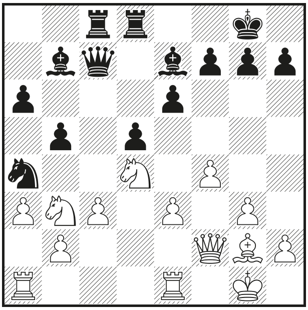
11.♘b3 ♘a4 12.♕d2 0-0 13.♘fd4 ♕b6 14.e3 ♖fd8 14...e5 15.♘f5 ♖ad8 16.f4 is a playable alternative.

15.f4 White chooses to prevent ...e5 at the cost of a long term weakness on e3.

15...♗e7



16.a3 a6 17.♖fe1 ♖ac8 18.♕f2 ♕c7

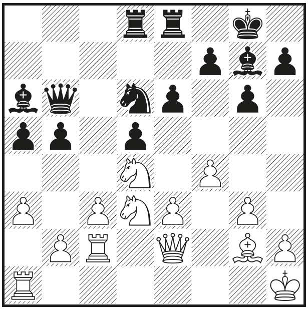


Black retains a slight edge but there is no immediate breakthrough

19.♖e2 ♘b6 20.♘c1 ♘c4 21.♘d3 ♘d6 22.♕e1 a5 23.♕d1 ♗a6 Black repositions the bishop preparing...b4 followed by an exchange.

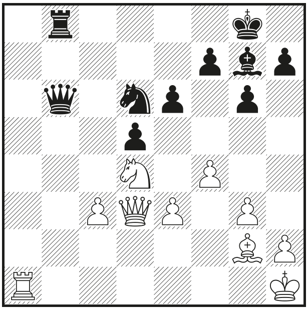
24.♗f1 ♕b6 25.♖c2 ♖e8 26.♔h1 ♗f8 27.♖ac1 ♖cd8 Black has the potential plan of ...f6 and ...e5.

28.♗g2 g6 29.♖a1 ♗g7 30.♕e2



A slight mistake allowing Black to break up the queenside with..b4.

30...b4 31.axb4 axb4 32.♕d1 ♗xd3 33.♕xd3 ♖a8 34.♖cc1 bxc3 35.bxc3 ♖xa1 36.♖xa1 ♖b8



Black is clearly better now as white has weak pawns on c3 and e3.

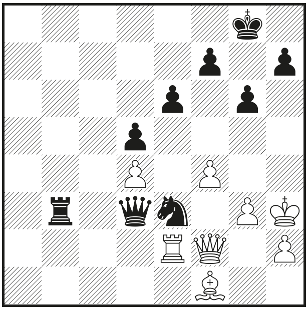
37.♗f3 ♕b2 38.♖d1 ♗xd4 39.cxd4 ♖b3 Winning material. The pawn on e3 will be lost.

40.♕d2 ♕a3 Keeping the queens on is preferable for Black as he can develop threats against the White king.

41.♕f2 41.♕c1 may be best offering the exchange of queens.

41...♖xe3 42.♔g2 ♖b3 43.♖d2 ♘c4 44.♖e2 ♕c1 45.♔h3 ♕c3 46.♗g2 ♕d3 Winning because of the threat of ♕f5+.

47.♗f1 ♘e3

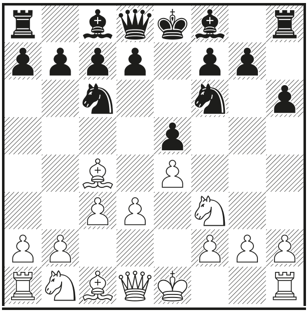


0-1

Brandon **Clarke** – David S **George**

Kvika Reykjavik Open 2022 Reykjavik ISL (3.18)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♘f6 4.d3 h6 5.c3

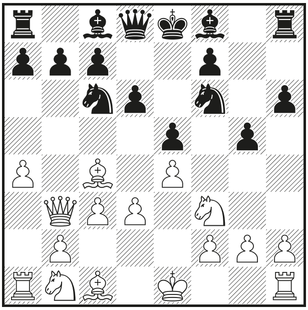


A Giuoco Piano.

5...d6 6.a4 Allwoing the bishop to retreat along the a2-g8 diagonal.

6...g5 A double edged move aiming to seize the initiative.

7.♕b3



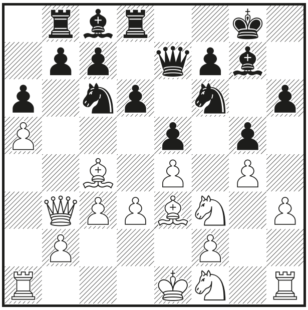
7...♕e7 7...♘a5 8.♗xf7+ ♔e7 9.♕a2 ♖h7 10.♗b3 White is better with his extra pawn.

8.a5 a6 8...♗g7.

9.h3 ♗g7 10.♗e3 0-0 11.♘bd2 White has a slight advantage.

11...♖d8 12.g4 White aims to play on the kingside.

12...♖b8 13.♘f1

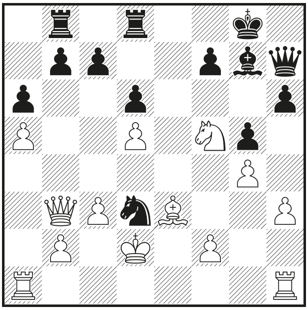


13...♗e6 14.♗d5 ♗xd5 14...♗d7 is worth consideration as Black may be able to threaten taking the bishop on d5.

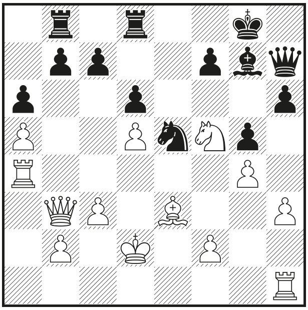
15.exd5 e4 16.♘3d2 ♘e5 17.dxe4 ♘xe4 17...♘d3+ 18.♔e2 ♘c5 19.♗xc5 dxc5 20.♔f3 slightly favours White but this is a better line.

18.♘xe4 ♘d3+ 19.♔d2 ♕xe4 20.♘g3 Now Black is positionally lost as the White knight will reach f5 when the knight blocks in the Black queen.

20...♕h7 21.♘f5



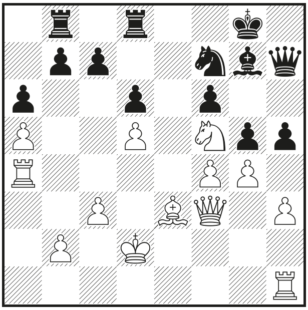
21...♘e5 22.♖a4



22.♗a7 ♖a8 23.♕xb7 is also possible

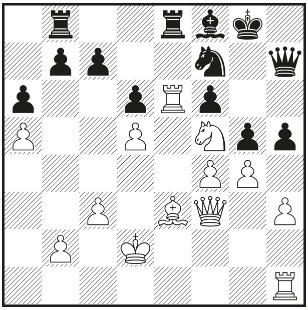
22...h5 23.♕d1 f6 24.f4 ♘f7 If 24...gxf4 25.♗xf4 is strong for White.

25.♕f3



Centralising the queen; 25.♔c1 is also good.

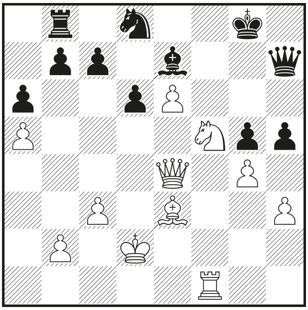
25...♖e8 26.♖e4 ♗f8 27.♖e6



A strong move.

27...♖xe6 28.dxe6 ♘d8 29.♕e4 29.fxg5 ♘xe6 30.gxf6 is also good.

29...♗e7 30.fxg5 fxg5 31.♖f1



With decisive threats.

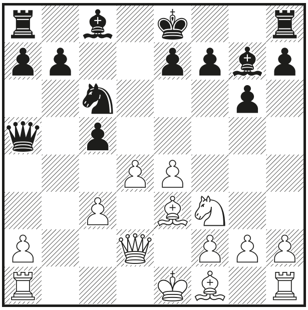
31...♘c6 32.♘xe7+ Winning a piece at least as the rook will vade at f7 and the queens are exchanged on h7.

1-0

Peter **Sowray** - Brandon **Clarke**

Kvika Reykjavik Open 2022 Reykjavik ISL (8.20)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♘f3 ♗g7 5.cxd5 ♘xd5 6.e4 ♘xc3 7.bxc3 c5 8.♗e3 ♕a5 9.♕d2 ♘c6



A Standard Grunfeld position often leading to an ending.

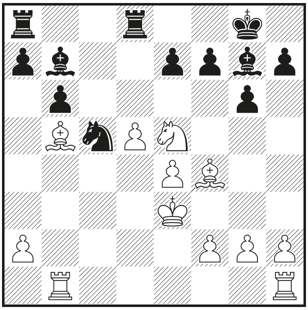
10.♖b1 cxd4 11.cxd4 ♕xd2+ 12.♔xd2 0-0 13.d5 White has the advantage with more space.

13...♖d8 14.♗d3 ♘a5 15.♗f4 b6 16.♔e2 Moving the King out of the line of fire of the Black rook but stronger is 16.♖hc1 f5 with a slight edge for White.

16...♘b7 16...f5 is logical and good eg 17.exf5 ♗xf5 18.♗xf5 gxf5 19.♖hd1 ♖ac8 20.♘h4 ♖c2+ 21.♔f1 ♖xa2 22.♘xf5 ♗f6 with a small plus for White.

17.♗b5 ♘c5 18.♔e3 If 18.♗c6 ♗a6+ 19.♔e3 ♖ac8; 18.♘d2 may be best.

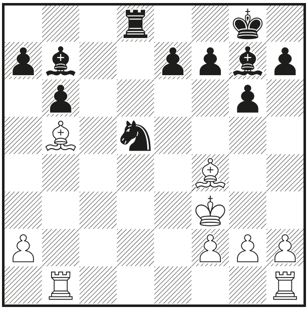
18...♗b7 19.♘e5



Black now has a combination to exploit the white king being in the centre of the board.

19...♘xe4 20.♘c6 If 20.♗c6 ♗xe5 21.♗xb7 *(21.♗xe5 ♘c5)* 21...♗xf4+ 22.♔xf4 *(22.♔xe4 ♖ab8)* 22...♘xf2 23.♗xa8 *(If 23.♖hf1 ♘d3+ 24.♔e3 ♖ab8* Black is much better*)* 23...♘xh1 24.♗c6 ♘f2 25.♖b3 f5 and the knight has an escape square on e4.

20...♘c3 21.♘xd8 ♘xd5+ 22.♔f3 ♖xd8



23.♔g3 If 23.♖bc1 ♘c3+ 24.♔g3 ♘xb5 is winning.

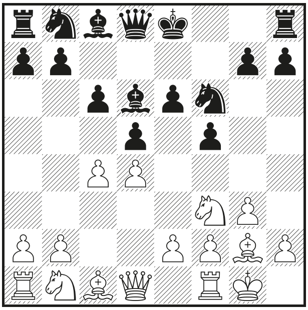
23...♘c3 24.♖b4 a5 25.♖b3 ♘e4+ 26.♔f3 ♘c5+ 27.♔g3 ♗d4 28.♖e1 ♘xb3 29.axb3 ♗c5 30.♗c4 ♔g7 31.♗e5+ f6 32.♗c7 ♖d7

0-1

Raunak **Sadhwani** – Simon 1 **Williams**

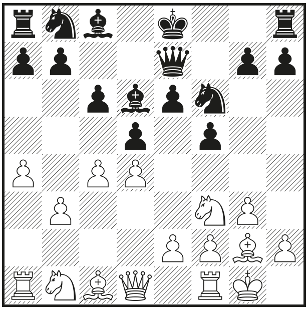
Kvika Reykjavik Open 2022 Reykjavik ISL (5.6)

1.d4 e6 2.c4 f5 3.g3 ♘f6 4.♗g2 d5 5.♘f3 c6 6.0-0 ♗d6



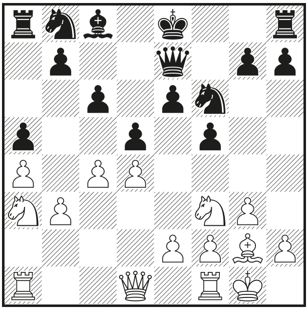
7.b3 Aiming to exchange the dark squared bishops by ♗a3.

7...♕e7 8.a4



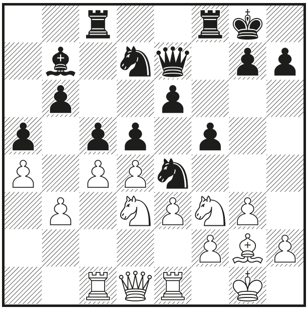
Forcing the exchange on a3.

8...a5 9.♗a3 ♗xa3 10.♘xa3



A slight edge for White now.

10...0-0 11.♘c2 ♘bd7 12.♘ce1 b6 13.♘d3 ♗b7 14.♖c1 c5 15.e3 ♖ac8 16.♖e1 ♘e4

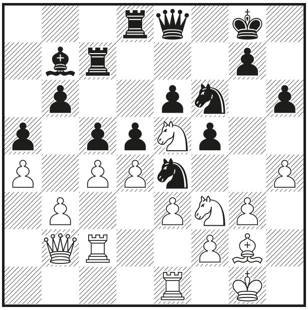


White is slightly better but Black has chances with his knight on e4.

17.h4 This weakens the kingside.

17...♖fd8 18.♕e2 ♘df6 19.♘de5 ♖c7 20.♕b2 ♕e8 20...♖dc8.

21.♖c2 h6



Black prepares the ..g5 thrust aiming to break open the kingside.

22.♖ec1 g5 A double edged move.

23.cxd5 ♗xd5 24.♘c4 cxd4 24...♗xc4 25.bxc4 cxd4 26.♘xd4 gxh4 27.♕xb6 ♖cc8 is better for White.

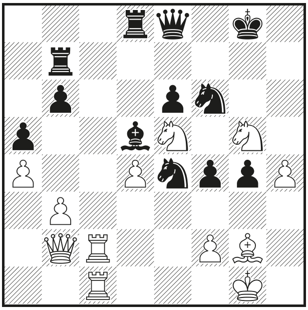
25.exd4 ♖b7 25...b5 26.♘xa5 ♖xc2 27.♕xc2 bxa4 28.bxa4 ♖a8 is almost equal.

26.♘ce5 f4 Black plays for a kingside attack 26...b5 is worth consideration.

27.g4 27.gxf4 g4 gives Black practical chances.

27...h5 27...b5 is worth consideration.

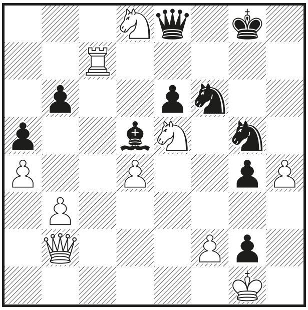
28.♘xg5 hxg4



29.♖c7 29.♘xg4 ♘xg4 30.♗xe4 ♕h5 31.♗xd5 exd5 32.♖c8 ♖b8 33.♖xd8+ ♖xd8 34.♕c2 is winning for White but difficult to see over the board.

29...f3 30.♘gf7 fxg2 31.♘xd8 Here 31.♘h6+ ♔h8 32.♖xb7 ♗xb7 33.♖c7 ♕h5 34.♘ef7+ ♔h7 35.♘xd8+ ♔xh6 36.♕c1+ ♔g6 37.♘xe6 is winning for White.

31...♖xc7 32.♖xc7 ♘g5



The winning thunderbolt.

Not 32...♕xd8 33.♕c1 with the threat of ♖c8.

33.f3 If 33.hxg5 ♕h5 34.♖g7+ ♔xg7 35.gxf6+ ♔xf6 36.♘d7+ ♔g7 37.♘xe6+ ♔h8 White cannot stop ...♕h1+.

33...gxf3 34.hxg5 ♕h5 White resigns as ...♕h1+ will win.

0-1

vika Reykjavik Open 2022 Reykjavik ISL Wed 6th Apr 2022 - Tue 12th Apr 2022
Leading Final Round 9 Standings:

Rk	SNo	NAME	Ti	FED	Rtg	Pts	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	6	Praggnanandhaa R	GM	IND	2624	7.5	0.0	9	41.5
2	8	Warmerdam Max	GM	NED	2599	7.0	0.0	9	43.0
3	9	Andersen Mads	GM	DEN	2582	7.0	0.0	9	42.0
4	12	Gretarsson Hjorvar Steinn	GM	ISL	2542	7.0	0.0	8	41.5
5	16	Mishra Abhimanyu	GM	USA	2524	7.0	0.0	8	37.0
6	10	Fier Alexandr	GM	BRA	2573	6.5	0.0	9	41.0
7	3	Niemann Hans Moke	GM	USA	2616	6.5	0.0	9	39.5
	7	Gupta Abhijeet	GM	IND	2424	6.5	0.0	9	39.5
9	26	Larkin Vladyslav	IM	UKR	2400	6.5	0.0	9	39.0
10	31	Korley Kassa	IM	DEN	2524	6.5	0.0	9	38.5
11	15	Maze Sebastien	GM	FRA	2436	6.5	0.0	9	38.0
	24	Clarke Brandon G I	IM	ENG	2314	6.5	0.0	9	38.0
13	48	Sarkar Justin	IM	USA	2532	6.5	0.0	9	37.0
14	14	Yoo Christopher Woojin	IM	USA	2510	6.5	0.0	8	39.0
15	18	Libiszewski Fabien	GM	FRA	2434	6.5	0.0	6	38.5
16	25	Jarmula Lukasz	GM	POL	2637	6.0	0.0	9	43.5
17	2	Gukesh D	GM	IND	2496	6.0	0.0	9	42.5
18	20	Beerdsen Thomas	IM	NED	2373	6.0	0.0	9	40.5
19	39	Song Julien	IM	FRA	2465	6.0	0.0	9	40.0
20	22	Hjartarson Johann	GM	ISL	2392	6.0	0.0	9	39.5
21	33	Tania Sachdev	IM	IND	2359	6.0	0.0	9	38.5
22	42	Rosen Eric	IM	USA	2306	6.0	0.0	9	37.7
23	50	Bjornsson Sigurbjorn	FM	ISL	2487	6.0	0.0	9	37.5
24	21	Laurent-Paoli Pierre	IM	FRA	2298	6.0	0.0	9	37.0
25	52	Minko Dmitry	CM	FID	2321	6.0	0.0	9	36.5
26	46	Heimisson Hilmir Freyr	FM	ISL	2411	6.0	0.0	9	36.0
27	30	Willow Jonah B	FM	ENG	2385	6.0	0.0	9	34.5
28	36	Martin Julian	IM	GER	2393	6.0	0.0	9	34.0
29	32	Baskin Robert	IM	GER	2638	6.0	0.0	9	34.0
30	1	Idani Pouya	GM	IRA	2569	6.0	0.0	8	44.0
31	11	Cornette Matthieu	GM	FRA	2378	6.0	0.0	8	41.0
32	38	Fantinel Thibault	IM	FRA	2501	6.0	0.0	8	40.0
33	19	Stefansson Vignir Vatnar	IM	ISL	2142	6.0	0.0	8	36.5
34	84	Garbuz Vitaliy		GER		6.0	0.0	8	35.5

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AIRTHINGS MASTERS
AND CHARITY CUP

CARLSEN IN HIS OWN CLASS

By GM Alex Colovic / alexcolovic.com

Carlsen's Champions Tour started with the Airthings Masters, which ran from 19 to 26 February.

The details of the format can be found in the March issue of the BCM. The 15-round qualification round robin and the shortened knock-out matches made for interesting dynamics and exciting games.

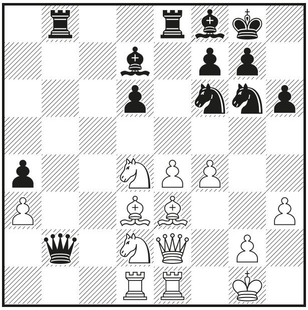
The major surprise of the Airthings Masters was the unusual number of favourites who didn't qualify: Aronian, Giri, Duda and Mamedyarov all failed to make the knock-out stage. Their places were taken by Artemiev, Esipenko, Hansen (the biggest surprise!) and Keymer.

Artemiev is known for his quick-play prowess and Esipenko is a rising star who already showed marked improvement at the first leg of the Berlin Grand Prix (see the March issue of BCM for details) - their qualification is not a surprise. A bigger surprise is Keymer's success, yet he is a prodigy whose time is perhaps already here. But Eric Hansen, a solid Grandmaster who nowadays is more famous as a streamer of the Chessbrah channel (on Youtube and Twitch) was definitely *the* surprise of the preliminaries.

The game he will definitely cherish most is his win against the World Champion.

Magnus **Carlsen** – Eric **Hansen**

Airthings Masters Prelim chess24.com INT (10.4)



The position is rather unclear, with a lot to calculate, especially whether the black queen can be trapped and how to defend against Black's attack on the queenside.

30.♖b1? Carlsen blunders.

30.♘c2! was the compact way to keep the queenside defended - the knight defends the pawn on a3 and now the threat is ♖b1.

30...♘xf4! Not a very complicated tactic. The knight is taboo as White's knight on d4 is hanging. After:

31.♕f1 ♕c3! Keeps latching onto the knight on d4. White is lost, being a pawn down for nothing, but Carlsen's hallucinations don't stop here.

32.♗b5 ♘g6 The simple retreat, keeping everything tight, though Black had the stronger and more spectacular 32...♘4d5!

33.♗xa4?? Amazing. Taking a pawn that is defended. Carlsen didn't wait for the obvious 33...♗xa4 and resigned immediately. As we know that he was suffering from Covid in this period, and we also saw how his strength returned in the next. Perhaps on Carlsen's example we can conclude that Covid doesn't have any long-term effects on mental ability.

0-1

The convincing win in the preliminaries by the last Challenger was definitely not a surprise. Nepomniachtchi was playing in his trademark style, quick and confident, and he even managed to beat the Champion with the black pieces! Asked whether he thought this was a small revenge for Dubai, he replied that he would have preferred to have this win in Dubai rather than in an online game.

Magnus **Carlsen** - Ian **Nepomniachtchi**

Airthings Masters Prelim chess24.com INT (4.7)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.g3 Carlsen uses the Catalan, his main prepared opening for the match in Dubai.

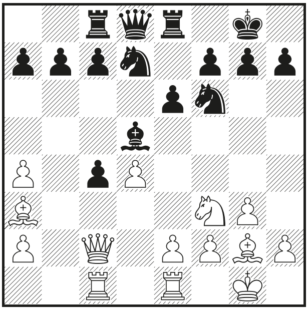
4...♗e7 5.♗g2 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.♘a3!? Carlsen repeats the opening idea that brought him an excellent win against Giri at this year's Wijk aan Zee. This game was analysed in the February issue of BCM.

7...♗xa3 8.bxa3 ♗d7 9.a4 ♗c6 10.♗a3 ♖e8 11.♕c2 ♘bd7 12.♖ac1 ♗d5 Here comes Nepomniachtchi's improvement over the game Carlsen-Giri.

12...a6 13.♕xc4 ♘b6 14.♕c3 ♘xa4 15.♕b3 ♕d5 16.♖xc6! gave White a dangerous initiative in: 1-0 (36) Carlsen,M (2865)-Giri,A (2772) Wijk aan Zee NED 2022.

13.♖fe1 Threatening e4.

13...♖c8?!



Perhaps Black mixed up his lines? After this move White obtains an excellent position.

Physically blocking the advance of the e-pawn doesn't work as 13...♘e4?! allows 14.♘e5 with an attack on both the knight on e4 and the pawn on c4;

13...♗e4 makes more sense, giving back the extra pawn but establishing a good grip over the light squares in the centre. 14.♕xc4 c6 with unclear play;

13...a5 is the engine's preferred way to play. 14.♖cd1 *(The idea is seen after 14.e4 ♗c6 15.♘d2 White cannot take on c4 with the queen because the pawn on e4 hangs, but now 15...♘b6! is Black's idea - with 13...a5 he fixed White's pawn on a4 and this achieved two goals: first that pawn is attacked by both knight and bishop and second the knight on b6 cannot be harassed with a5.)* 14...♘b6 15.♘e5 White regains the pawn but Black is comfortably fine after 15...♗xg2 16.♔xg2 ♘fd5 17.♘xc4 ♘f4+!? - the simple capture on c4 is also fine. 18.gxf4 ♕d5+ 19.e4 ♕xc4, with nothing really to complain about - in fact White should be more careful here as his pawns on a4 and d4 are subject to attack.

14.e4 ♗c6 15.♘d2! White collects the c-pawn and Black will have no compensation for White's full centre and the bishop pair. His only chances now are some tactical tricks...

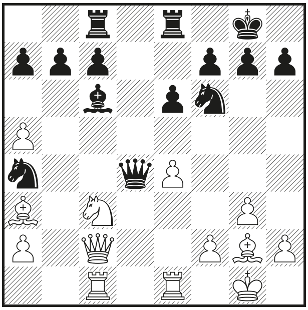
15...c3 16.♘b1 Not 16.♕xc3 ♗xa4.

16...♘b6 17.a5 ♘a4 Black is hanging by a thread, if he is not to lose the c3-pawn for nothing.

18.♘xc3 Objectively this is fine, but there was no need to go for complications when White had a safe option.

18.♕d3! would have been much better from a practical perspective - White consolidates by securing the central d4-pawn and will capture on c3 on the next move. 18...b6 19.♘xc3 ♘xc3 20.♕xc3 ♗b7 21.h4 with a risk-free advantage to White.

18...♕xd4



19.♘xa4? A tactical mishap by Carlsen, after which Black is better.

19.e5! was the correct continuation, though this required some calculation. 19...♘xc3 20.♗xc6 bxc6 21.exf6 ♘d5 22.fxg7 when White still keeps some advantage thanks to his safer king.

19...♕xa4 20.♕xa4 ♗xa4 All of a sudden White is in an endgame a pawn down. His bishops do provide compensation, but this is far from what White expected after the opening.

21.♗b2 b6 22.♗f1? Carlsen plays academically.

22.♗xf6! gxf6 23.e5! is the computer's concrete solution. The threat is ♗b7 followed by ♖xc7 and Black cannot really defend against it. 23...fxe5 24.♗b7 ♖b8 25.♖xc7 and White's activity should suffice for a draw.

22...c5 23.f3 ♖ed8 23...b5! - creating a powerful pawn double - was better. White could have prevented this by playing ♗a6 on the previous move.

24.♗a6 Carlsen takes the second chance.

24...♖c6 25.♗e5 ♘d7 26.♗f4 e5 27.♗e3 ♖d6 28.♖b1 ♘f8 29.f4 Carlsen tries to open the game, but this also creates weaknesses.

29.♖b2 was a more positional approach, trying to put pressure on the b-file. White wants to double on the b-file so Black is forced to go back with the knight in order to have his b6-pawn protected. 29...♘d7 30.♗c4 ♔f8 31.g4 and it's not easy for Black to get his queenside majority moving.

29...♗c2 It was better to keep the centre as it is with 29...♘d7, as now the position opens to White's liking.

30.fxe5 ♖g6 31.♖b2 ♗xe4 32.♖f1 Targeting the pawn on f7.

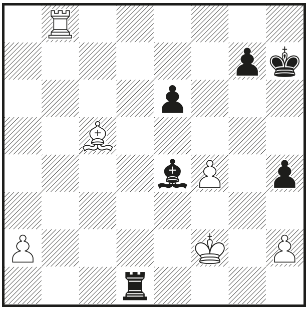
32...♖d7 33.e6 Exchanging the e-pawn for the b-pawn.

33...♘xe6 34.axb6 axb6 35.♖xb6 h5 36.♗c4 h4 37.♗xe6 This is the safest: the opposite-coloured bishops should guarantee White a draw.

37...fxe6 38.♖b8+ ♔h7 39.♖f4 ♖d1+ 40.♔f2 ♖f6 41.♗xc5? A curious mistake. This allows Black to win the pawn on h2, thus creating a passed pawn on the h-file.

41.♖xf6 gxf6 42.♗xc5 was better; the point is that after 42...♖h1 43.♔e3 ♗d5 White has *(43...♗c2 is the winning move in the note to Black's 42nd move, but here there is no pawn on the fourth rank so White has 44.♖b4 ♖xh2 45.♖xh4+ ♖xh4 46.gxh4 with a draw.)* 44.♖b4 or even 44.♖b2. 44...♖xh2 45.♖xh4+ with an elementary draw after 45...♖xh4 46.gxh4 ♗xa2 47.♔f4.

41...♖xf4+ 42.gxf4



42...♗d5? Black misses the chance.

42...♖h1! 43.♔e3 ♗c2! covers the second rank and wins the h2-pawn. 44.a4 ♖xh2 45.a5 ♖h3+ 46.♔f2 ♗e4 should be winning for Black has he can control White's a-pawn while White finds it difficult to control Black's h-pawn - the difference is in the bishops: Black's bishop both controls White's pawn and supports its own, while White's bishop only supports its own pawn.

43.♖b2! Now White should draw again.

43...♖d3 44.♔e1 ♔g6 Black is still pressing, but the position is objectively a draw.

45.a4 ♖c3 46.♗d6 ♖c1+ 47.♔d2 ♖a1 48.♗e5 ♖xa4 The a-pawn didn't matter as it couldn't advance much anyway.

49.♖b1 ♖a2+ 50.♖b2 ♖a7 51.♖b1 ♔f5 52.♖a1 ♖d7 53.♖g1 53.♔e3? g5! is a nice trick that White prevents with the game move.

53...♗g2+ 54.♔e3 h3 55.♗d4 ♖b7 56.♖c1 ♗d5 57.♖g1 ♖b3+ 58.♔d2 g6 Black wants to keep as many pawns as possible.

58...♔xf4 59.♗xg7 only reduces the material on the board.

59.♖g5+? A strange check: the rook is awkwardly placed on g5.

Something like 59.♗c3 and continuing to shuffle kept the balance, though Black would have tried for many move moves.

59...♔e4? 59...♔xf4! 60.♖xg6 ♗e4! wins for Black, though this is not so easy to spot. The point is that White cannot defend against the double threat of ...♖d3, winning the bishop on d4, and the simple ...♗xg6, picking up the rook.

60.♗e5?! It was better to put the bishop on c3 in order to make it more difficult for the black rook to come to the kingside.

60...♖f3 61.♔e1 ♗c4 62.♖xg6? 62.♖g1! was the only, but sufficient, defence, preventing the ...♖f1 check from the game that pushes away the white king and exposes the pawn on h2. Still, it's obvious that White was under serious pressure in the last several moves, so even the World Champions succumbs.

62...♖f1+ 63.♔d2 ♖f2+ 64.♔c3 ♗d5? This natural move lets the win slip, but the winning moves are study-like.

64...♗a2! 65.♖h6 ♖xh2 wins for Black, the point being that now White's king cannot hide on d6, though the win requires some more precision.

65.♖h6 ♖xh2 Black wants to play ...♖h1, ...h2 and get away from h1 with check.

66.♔b4 The king runs for cover towards d6.

66...♔f5 67.♔c5? He is just one move short!

67.♖f6+! puts Black in a strange situation - he cannot improve his position. 67...♔g4 68.♖g6+! ♔f5 *(68...♔f3 69.f5! saves the day;*

68...♔h5 69.♖g5+ ♔h6 70.♗g7+ ♔h7 71.♗e5 also draws.) 69.♖f6+ ♔e4 70.♖h6 and we have a repetition.

67...♖c2+! 68.♔d6 h2 The pawn promotes now.

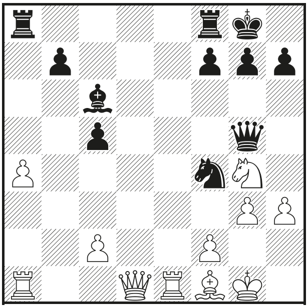
0-1

The Champion had a topsy-turvy event and the reason for that was revealed when in one interview he said that he was still recovering from Covid. The fact that even in such a state he went on to win his three matches to clinch the Masters shows how much ahead he is of the rest.

In the knock-out stage Carlsen started to play better and won his matches 2.5-1.5 against Le Quang, 2.5-0.5 against Artemiev and only in the final did he encounter a stiffer resistance. His last challenger managed to draw the first set, but succumbed in the second one 2.5-0.5. The decisive game was the second game from the second set when Carlsen moved ahead on the scoreboard.

Magnus **Carlsen** - Ian **Nepomniachtchi**

Airthings Masters KO 2022
chess24.com INT (3.22)



The (almost) symmetrical pawn structure and the open centre make this position equal. However, here Nepomniachtchi becomes inappropriately ambitious.

24...♖ad8? The simple retreat 24...♘e6 kept the position easily balanced, where it is White who needs to be a bit more careful in view of the attack on the a4-pawn. A semi-forced line is 25.♘e5 ♗xa4 26.♕d5 ♗xc2 27.♖xa8 ♖xa8 28.♕xb7 ♖f8 29.♗c4 where White's activity compensates for the pawn deficit.

25.gxf4 ♕xf4 26.♕e2 Black doesn't have compensation for the piece here.

26...♖de8 27.♕d3 h5 28.♘h2 It's difficult to say what Nepomniachtchi was hoping for when sacrificing the piece. White has a lot of pieces around his king so it's impossible to launch anything resembling an attack.

28...♖e5 29.♖xe5 ♕xe5 30.c3 ♖e8 31.♗g2 White consolidated and went on to win the game.

1-0

Nepomniachtchi had a chance to level the score in the third game, but missed several close-to-winning continuations and eventually even lost the game.

THE CHARITY CUP

The events that shook the world from 24 February onwards had a huge impact on the Charity Cup, which started on 19 March.

The first change was the aim of the tournament - the organisers decided the event was to be a fundraiser for UNICEF to protect the children in Ukraine.

The second change was the decision not to invite any of the Russian players who had a right to play.

This second change saw an influx of fresh faces like Anton, Navara, van Foreest, Jones and two women players, the World Champion Ju Wenjun and Lei Tingjie. Some of these fresh faces took maximum advantage of the opportunity - van Foreest, Navara and Anton all made the qualification stage and together with Niemann they faced the favourites Carlsen, Le Quang (who won the preliminaries) Duda and Ding Liren.

I found the American Niemann very interesting to observe. I had a chance to meet him in Dubai, during the World Championship match, and I spent quite some time with him there. I even got to play a couple of blitz games with him and I noted his manner of play. He played very fast and almost without blunders with a fine positional feeling, not fearing endgames and showing decent technique in them. These characteristics were also visible in his games in the Tour.

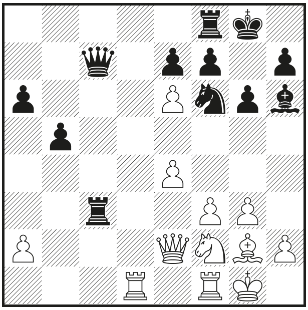
In his own words, he put too much pressure on himself in the Airthings Masters and this led to his finishing second from the bottom. In the Charity Cup he was more relaxed and this showed immediately as he took the early lead and then proceeded to qualify without problems.

For every aspiring chess player meeting the World Champion is the maximum you can hope for - you get to match your ability against the best there is. With Niemann was the same and he got to play the quarter-final against Carlsen.

The first game was a very promising one for Niemann. He showed no fear and his bravery was rewarded.

Magnus **Carlsen** - Hans Moke **Niemann**

Charity Cup | Knockout (1.4)



Carlsen got a serious advantage from the opening but Niemann's continuous search for active counterplay didn't allow him to stabilise it and now things are pretty unclear.

26.f4 Carlsen wants to make Black's dark-squared bishop a dead one by establishing a pawn chain from h2 to e5.

26.exf7+ ♖xf7 27.f4 was an alternative, but here Black has 27...e5! - undermining White's pawn chain and the move Carlsen wanted to avoid with the game continuation.

26...fxe6 27.e5 ♘d5 28.♗xd5 exd5 29.♖xd5 Material is equal, but White is hoping to exchange some of Black's active pieces when the out-of-play bishop on h6 will become a considerable factor.

29...♗xf4! Objectively this is good, but psychologically it is even better. Niemann refuses to be the passive side with a potentially bad bishop and immediately gets rid of it in exchange for active play against White's king. This puts Carlsen on the defensive, as he now has to guard against

Black's threats. (In a private conversation Niemann called this choice "weird").

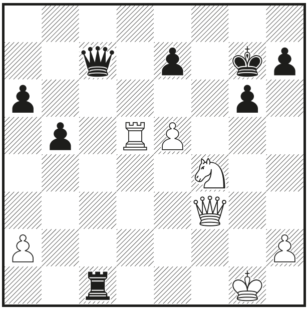
The engine doesn't mind the bishop on h6: 29...♖c2 30.♕d3 ♖c8 31.♕b3 ♔h8 and seems to think that Black's activity along the c-file doesn't allow White to take advantage of the stranded bishop.

30.gxf4 ♖xf4 31.♘d3 ♖xf1+ 32.♕xf1 ♖c2 White has too many weaknesses to defend in order to be able to think about using the extra knight.

33.♕f3 ♔g7! 33...♖xa2? is bad in view of 34.e6! ♕xh2+ 35.♔f1 ♖a1+ 36.♘e1 and suddenly the black king is under attack.

34.♘f4 Threatening ♘e6.

34...♖c1+?



This allows White to consolidate. Black's flurry of activity can be parried.

34...♕b6+! gets away from the threat and starts attacking White's king. After 35.♔f1 ♖c1+ 36.♖d1 ♖xd1+ 37.♕xd1 ♕c6 Black's queen is way too active with threats of checks and attacks on White's pawns.

35.♔g2 ♕c2+ 36.♘e2 ♖e1 37.♔f2 ♕b1 38.♕d3? But this move shows that under pressure even the World Champion can fail to find the best moves. This is the best proof that Black's choice on move 29 was the correct one.
38.♘g3! covers the f1-square and neutralises Black's activity. 38...♖g1 39.♕f4 threatening ♖d7. 39...♕e1+ 40.♔f3 and the king escapes: the rook on g1 is dominated by the white knight. 40...♕c3+ 41.♕e3 ♕xe3+ 42.♔xe3. The endgame is winning for White as his centralisation allows him to keep all his pawns defended, for example 42...♖g2 43.♖d2

38...♖f1+ 39.♔e3 ♕e1 Now Black's attack continues. The threat is to give checks on f2 and e1, something that White cannot avoid.

40.e6 ♕f2+ 41.♔d2 ♕e1+ 42.♔e3 ♕f2+ 43.♔d2 ♕e1+ 44.♔e3

½-½

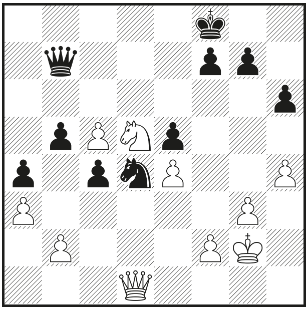
Niemann continued with brave and sacrificial play in the next two games but he was ground down by Carlsen's technique. I really liked his psychological approach of not allowing himself to be forced on the defensive, not fearing sacrifices and ambitious play. He will take a lot of positives from this match and this will further spur his improvement.

DING LIREN'S RETURN

The semi-final saw the duel between the World Champion and the player who most deserves to be in the Candidates - Ding Liren. After two draws Carlsen's persistence in the third game was rewarded.

Magnus **Carlsen – Ding** Liren

Charity Cup | Knockout (10.2)



The position appears deadlocked: the centralised knights compensate each other while White’s passed c-pawn is easily controlled.

36.f4 Carlsen pushes forward.

36...♕c6 37.♕h5 f5! A good move, defending the pawn on e5 and undermining the white knight by attacking the pawn on e4.

38.fxe5 fxe4 39.e6! Carlsen continues to seek chances.

39...♕xe6 39...♘xe6 was also possible, for example 40.♕f5+ ♔e8 41.♘b4 ♕d7 42.♕xe4 ♔d8 when the king will be able to control the passed c-pawn.

40.♘f4 ♕f5 41.♕d1 Note how White keeps the initiative by constantly creating threats. Now the knight on d4 is attacked.

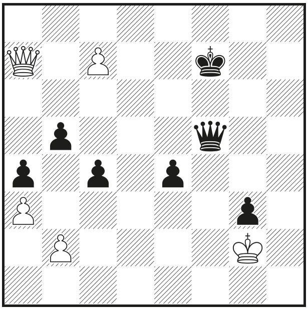
41...g5 Ding doesn’t flinch and meets White’s attack with counter-attack.

41...♕xc5?? would be a gross blunder in view of the elementary 42.♕xd4 ♕xd4 43.♘e6+, winning a piece.

42.hxg5 hxg5 43.♕xd4 gxf4 44.c6 White’s only hope is the passed c-pawn. It can move forward thanks to the elimination of the knight on d4, which was controlling the c6-square.

44...fxg3 45.c7 ♔f7 Avoiding queening with check and threatening ...♕f3.

46.♕a7!

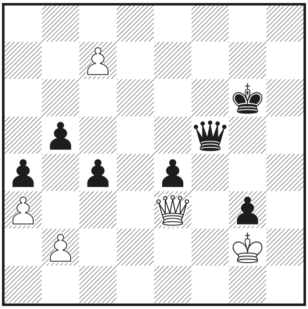


A tricky move, threatening c8♕+.

46...♔g6? Carlsen’s persistence paid off. Black had many ways to draw, but unfortunately this isn’t one of them.

46...♕f3+ was the most natural one. Black gives a perpetual check after 47.♔h3 g2+ 48.♔h2 ♕h5+ 49.♔xg2 ♕f3+ 50.♔g1 ♕d1+ and the king cannot escape the checks. There are also other perpetuals in this line.

47.♕e3!



Perhaps the move Ding missed. The queen suddenly returns and now Black doesn’t have a check, his pawn on g3 is hanging with check and the c7-pawn is one step from promotion.

47...♔f7 48.♕xg3 White now manages to defend his king against checks and to help his passed pawn. The threats are either ♕f2 (exchanging queens) or ♕h3, with the idea of promoting.

48...♕e6 49.♕h3 ♕g6+ 50.♔h1 No more checks and the pawn promotes. After the following:

50...♕f6 Ding didn’t wait for the natural 51.c8♕ and resigned.

1-0

In a must-win situation Ding couldn't make the maximum of a promising middlegame position and when the draw was inevitable he tried for more and lost.

CARLSEN AND DUDA

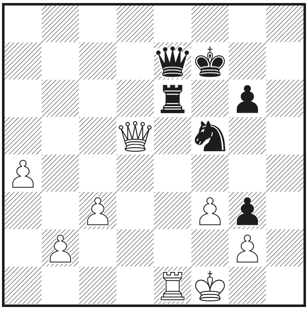
The other finalist was a qualified Candidate - Duda. He eliminated Anton and Le Quang without losing a game.

The final started in a very one-sided fashion. Carlsen won the first set 2.5-0.5 and won a crushing game one of the second set. He only needed one more point from the remaining three games to win the event.

Then something unexpected happened. Carlsen was playing well, everything was going his way and yet, totally against the trend, he lost the next game.

Magnus **Carlsen** - Jan-Krzysztof **Duda**

Charity Cup | Knockout (20.1)



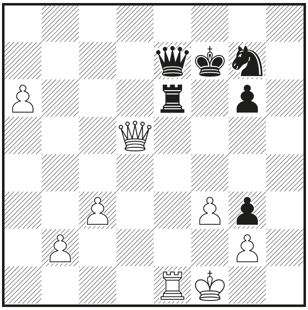
Carlsen was winning in this game, then he was problem-free equal and now he shouldn't have problems in drawing. He could have exchanged on e6 earlier as well, and this would have led to an endgame where his three connected passed pawns would have occupied Black's king and knight and allowed White to eliminate Black's pawns on the g-file.

47.a5 This is possible, but allows Black to keep the queens on the board.

47.♕xe6+ ♕xe6 48.♖xe6 ♔xe6 49.♔e2 was the simplest. The point is that after 49...♘h4 50.♔f1 the knight will either have to stay on h4 to keep White's king on f1, when the three connected passed pawns will keep the black king on the queenside, or, if the knight retreats to the centre, White will be able to play f4 and ♔f3, for example 50...♘f5 51.♔e2 ♔d5 52.a5 ♔c5 53.b4+ ♔b5 54.f4 threatening $f3. 54...♘h4 55.♔f1 with equilibrium on both wings.

47...♘g7 Now, if ♖xe6 ♘xe6, the queens will remain on and this increases Black's chances as he can hope to create threats against White's king.

48.a6??



A strange case of Carlsen missing his opponent's next move, which also happened to be his threat after the knight defended the rook.

48.♖xe6 ♘xe6 49.♔e2 ♕a7 50.f4 defending the pawn on g2, was still OK for White, though obviously more complicated than without queens.; 48.♖e4 ♕a7 49.♔e2 ♕f2+ 50.♔d3 was also possible, the idea being that 50...♕xg2 51.♕d7+ ♔f6 52.♕d4+ ♔f7 53.♕d7+ leads to a perpetual;

48.b4 ♕a7 49.♖e2 was another way to defend. All these lines show that with the queens on the board things were more complicated for White, therefore making

Carlsen's decision to leave them on not a very practical one.

48...♕a7! Black doesn't only threaten mate on f2, he also wants to pick up the a6-pawn.

49.♕b7+ 49.♖e2 ♕xa6 makes the whole difference - White voluntarily put the pawn on a6 where it could be taken.

49...♕xb7 50.axb7 ♖b6 51.b4 ♖xb7 The endgame is easily winning for Black - first of all White has only two pawns for the piece, and, secondly, his knight can pin down a piece to the defence of the pawn on g2, which coupled with the active rook should give him decisive difference in activity.

52.♔e2 ♘h5 Going to f4.

53.♔d3 ♘f4+ 54.♔c4 ♖e7 It was possible to take the pawn as after 54...♘xg2 55.♖g1 Black has 55...♘e3+ 56.♔d3 ♘f5 safely defending the pawn on g3.

55.♖g1 ♖c7+ 56.♔b3 ♘e2 Now Black wins the pawn on c3.

57.♖e1 ♘xc3 58.♖c1 ♘d5 59.♖xc7+ ♘xc7 60.♔c4 ♔e6 61.♔c5 ♔e5 62.♔c4 In view of 62...♘d5-f4 White resigned.

0-1

An unbelievable turnaround! Showing that he is human, Carlsen couldn't shake off the shock from the loss and lost the next game too, this time in crushing style.

Jan-Krzysztof **Duda** – Magnus **Carlsen**

Charity Cup | Knockout (21.1)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.g3 Duda was in a must-win situation, as with the win in the previous game he had only tied the score while still trailing by one set, so in this last white game he was forced to try to win. In order to do so he chooses to avoid theoretical battles.

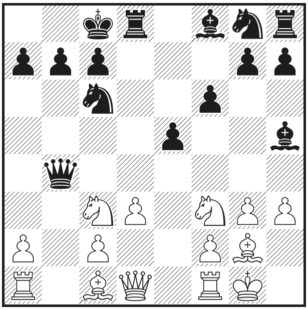
3...d5 Black can react in many ways, but the principled choice he needs to make is whether he will push ...d5 or play ...d6.

4.exd5 ♕xd5 5.♘c3 ♕d6 6.♗g2 ♗g4 Black has a very comfortable version of the Centre Counter (the Scandinavian Defence).

7.h3 ♗h5 8.d3 f6 The more aggressive 8...f5 was also possible.

9.0-0 0-0-0 10.b4!? Sharp stuff!

10...♕xb4

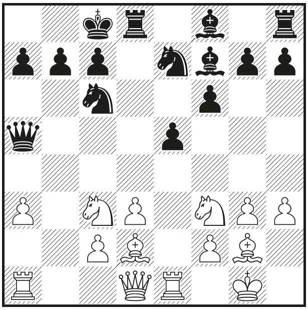


Carlsen accepts the challenge. For now there is no obvious way in which White can use the b-file, but that will always be on his mind. An alternative was to ignore the b-pawn and play 10...f5.

Taking with the knight is bad as it allows White to take over the b-file immediately with 10...♘xb4?! 11.♖b1 and now if the knight retreats 11...♘c6?! 12.♘b5 ♕e7 13.♗e3 allows White to develop a decisive attack. This line shows the dangers Black faces if he allows White too much freedom.

11.♗d2 ♕a5 12.a3 Preventing ...♗b4.

12...♘ge7 13.♖e1 ♗f7?



A mistake, after which White's attack accelerates and cannot be stopped.

13...♘d5? is bad in view of 14.♘xd5 ♕xd5 15.g4 ♗g6 16.♘xe5 when Black's position falls apart - this was the idea behind White's 13.♖e1 - the rook defends the knight on e5 so the queen cannot take it;

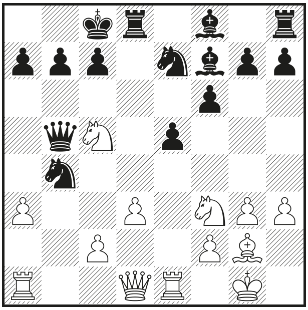
13...♕a6! Black has to get away from the possible discovered attack along the e1-a5 diagonal. 14.♘a2!? *(14.♘e4 ♘d5 is already good for Black.)* 14...♗f7 15.♘b4 ♕a4 leads to a double-edged position.

14.♘e4 ♕a4 15.♘c5 The knight transferred from c3 to c5 with tempo.

15...♕b5 16.♗b4 Not a bad move, but White missed a great chance here. In truth, the winning sequence was not easy to see.

16.♘xe5! fxe5 *(16...♘xe5? allows more spectacular play with 17.♗xb7+ ♔b8 18.♖xe5!! fxe5 19.♗e3 and with a full rook down White calmly threatens ♖b1 and Black cannot do anything about it.)* 17.♕g4+ ♔b8 18.♘xb7!! Most likely this is the move that both players missed. 18...♕xb7 19.♖ab1 ♗d5 20.♖xb7+ ♔xb7 21.♖b1+ ♔a8 22.♕a4 with a winning position for White. Black is fine materially speaking, but his lack of coordination and development make it impossible for him to defend.

16...♘xb4?



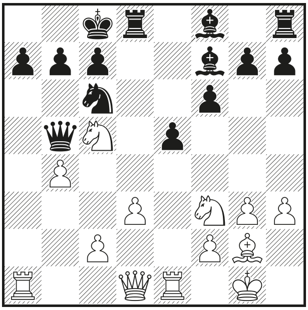
This opens the long diagonal for the fianchettoed bishop and also the a-file for the rook. A very bad move by Carlsen without any positives behind it.

16...♘f5! was the only way for Black to stay in the game, which obviously speaks of the difficulties he was facing. After 17.♘e4 ♕b6 Black won't take on b4 voluntarily, which would open the a-file for White and connect White's pawns. 18.♘fd2 a5!? 19.♗xf8 ♖hxf8 20.♖b1 ♕a7 leads to very unclear play.

17.axb4 Natural and more than enough.

To show how bad Black's last move was, even giving away a full piece with 17.♘xe5! fxe5 18.axb4, which is winning for White!

17...♘c6



Trying to close the long diagonal but it's too late now.

18.♘g5! Opening the d1-h5 diagonal for the queen. It was possible to do it by taking on e5 as well.

18...fxg5 19.♕g4+ ♔b8 20.♘d7+ ♖xd7 21.♕xd7 Black's position is in disarray.

21...♗xb4 The bishop cannot escape: 21...♗g6 22.♗xc6 bxc6 23.♕d8+ ♔b7 24.♖xa7+! mates after 24...♔xa7 25.♕xc7+ ♔a6 26.♖a1+ ♕a5 27.♖xa5#

22.♖eb1 White threatens ♗xc6 and ♕xf7.

22...a5 23.♗xc6 ♕b6 23...bxc6 24.♕xf7 with c3 next wins easily.

24.c3 Black loses a lot of material.

24...♖f8 25.cxb4 a4 26.♕e7

1-0

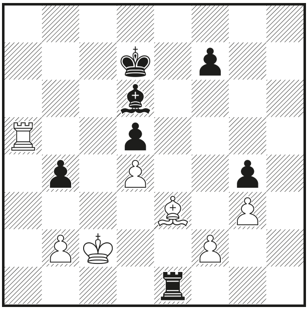
As if in a flash, Duda made the impossible - he had won two games in a row against the World Champion and was leading the set, needing a draw in the last game to equalise the score. He made that draw and the match went to the blitz tie-break.

It is difficult to say what happened to Carlsen, what derailed his practically certain path to victory. When it was impossible to notice even a chink in his armour or a sign of any weakness, he suddenly collapsed. In such cases all one can say is that it is something psychological, with the player himself the only person capable of solving the problem.

Whether it was the change of the rhythm, moving to faster controls, or something else, Carlsen returned to his dominating ways and won both blitz games. This time it was Duda who blundered in an equal endgame in the first game. Did he get overambitious and thought that after taking over the initiative in the match Carlsen was ready to be beaten?

Magnus **Carlsen** - Jan-Krzysztof **Duda**

Charity Cup | Knockout (23.1)



Carlsen squandered his advantage earlier on and now the position is dead equal.

48...♗xg3?? That is, unless you give up a piece for nothing. A strange blunder by Duda.

48...♔c6 was an easy move to make a draw.

49.♔d2 ♗c7 50.♖xd5+ ♔e6 51.♖c5 Both Black's pieces are attacked and one is lost. An elementary sequence of moves for these guys, even in blitz.

51...g3 52.♔xe1

1-0

The second blitz game was a tactical melee where the objective evaluation of the position as being good for Black wasn't affected by any blunders.

Jan-Krzysztof **Duda** – Magnus **Carlsen**

Charity Cup | Knockout (24.1)

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.f3 e6 4.♘c3 ♘f6 A curious transposition: now the game enters French territory. The usual Caro-Kann move is 4...♗b4.

5.e5 ♘fd7 6.♘ce2 This is an alternative line, White wants to strengthen his centre with c3.

6.f4 c5 leads to a well-known and very popular variation of the Steinitz Variation of the French Defence, arising after 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5.

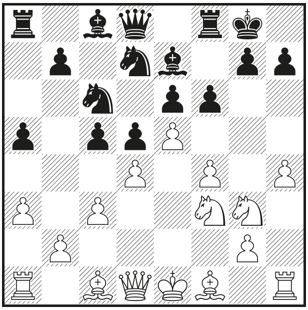
6...c5 7.c3 ♘c6 8.f4 ♗e7 9.♘f3 0-0 A standard theoretical position where White has many moves at his disposal. His ideal scenario is to manage to put the bishop on d3 and lock down the queenside by playing a3 and b4. If Black knows what he is doing, he will never allow White do these things.

10.h4 An aggressive choice. The main alternatives are 10.g3, 10.♗e3 and 10.a3.

10...f6 Black's counterplay is based on undermining White's centre, often combined with a sacrifice of a piece on e5 or d4, all with the idea to attack White's king stuck in the centre while White is lagging back in development.

11.a3 Threatening b4, which would clarify the situation on the queenside. Naturally, Black prevents it.

11...a5 12.♘g3?!



White starts to go astray. He banks on an all-or-nothing attack on the kingside, which objectively doesn't suffice. Best was 12.♗e3, strengthening the pawn on d4.

12.♘eg1 is a typical idea for White in this variation, freeing the path for the bishop to d3. But here we can see Black's typical idea of counterplay after 12...cxd4 13.cxd4 ♕b6 14.♗d3 fxe5 15.fxe5 ♘dxe5! 16.dxe5 ♘xe5 with a strong attack in: 0-1 (27) Macieja,B (2582)-Ivanchuk,V (2731) Moscow 2001.

12...♕b6 13.♗d3 No way back for White anymore.

13.♗e2 wasn't better, as after 13...cxd4 14.cxd4 Black has a pleasant choice. Either 14...♘xd4! *(or 14...fxe5 15.fxe5 ♖xf3! 16.gxf3 ♘xd4 with a strong initiative.)* 15.♕xd4 ♗c5 16.♕c3 ♗f2+ 17.♔d1 ♗xg3 with a clear pawn up.

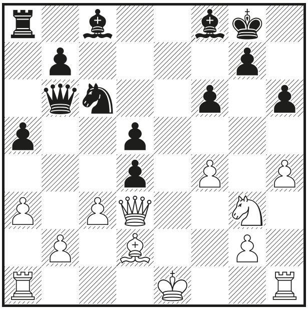
13...cxd4 14.♘g5 *Va banque.*

14.cxd4 fxe5 *(or 14...♘xd4 15.♘xd4 fxe5 which is also great for Black.)* 15.dxe5 *(15. fxe5 ♘xd4! 16.♘xd4 ♘xe5 is practically winning for Black. Two pawns for the piece and a long-term attack against White's king stuck in the centre.)* 15...♘dxe5! 16.fxe5 ♘xe5 17.♖f1 ♘xf3+ 18.♖xf3 ♗d7 with excellent compensation for Black.

14...h6 15.♘xe6 ♘dxe5! Carlsen goes for the counter-attack even though the simple 15...♖f7 was also possible.

16.♘xf8 ♘xd3+ 17.♕xd3 ♗xf8 A difficult position for White. He needs to win but must defend almost indefinitely as his king is weak.

18.♗d2?



Duda continues in desperate mode.

18.♖b1 like it or not, White had to defend. 18...♕a6!? the engine likes Black's chances even more in an endgame! *(18...a4!? 19.0-0 ♗e6 is also good for Black, this time in a middlegame.)* 19.♕xa6 ♖xa6 20.cxd4 ♘xd4 when White's problem is lack of coordination and Black's strong bishops will never let him have some peace.

18...♗g4 Threatening ...♖e8.

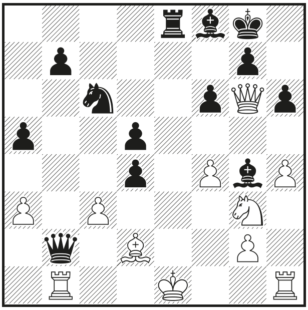
18...♕xb2 was also possible, for example 19.0-0 ♕b3 with ...♕c4 next, but with the game move Carlsen plays for the attack, not allowing White to castle.

19.♕g6 Attacking the bishop on g4, controlling e8 and hoping for ♘f5 or ♘h5. A lot of ideas for one move, just that it abandons his camp and Black is faster.

19.0-0? loses to 19...dxc3+ 20.♗e3 d4 21.♗f2 cxb2 when Black has three pawns for the exchange.

19...♕xb2 20.♖b1 20.0-0 ♕xd2 21.♕xg4 dxc3 and the central pawns will decide.

20...♖e8+!



Now this is possible because the queen on g6 has to stay there to defend the rook on b1.

21.♔f1 ♕xd2 Black picks up more material.

22.♕xe8 ♕xf4+ 23.♔g1 ♕xg3 24.♖xb7 ♘e5 With the threats of ...♘f3 and ...d3-d2 coming, White resigned.

0-1

It was unexpected to see Carlsen unravel to lose one easily drawn game and then lose another as if by inertia, but it was impressive to see him regain composure and win the tie-break.

This was a second win for Carlsen in the Champions Tour. I get the impression that his consistency, even when feeling ill or not playing his best, puts him in a class of his own in modern chess. Particularly in the Champions Tour, it feels as if the other players have given up on trying to catch him or be any sort of competition.

Yes, a younger player like Niemann or even Duda will try to raise his level when playing him, but for the time being none of them comes close. The consistently high level of his moves over a period of a whole tournament is something that nobody in the world can match and until a player of similar ability appears, we will have the Mighty Magnus dominate everywhere he plays.

STANDINGS OVERALL

	Name	FCI Score	Rtg	Prize
1	Magnus Carlsen	72.300	2822	$31250
2	Ian Nepomniachtchi	77.04	2805	$22250
3	Andrey Esipenko	65.74	2754	$12000
4	Vladislav Artemiev	47.73	2743	$12000
5	Eric Hansen	57.33	2682	$8250
6	Ding Liren	73.44	2757	$7500
7	Liem Quang Le	67.20	2709	$7500
8	Vincent Keymer	73.32	2696	$7500
9	Anish Giri	65.34	2750	$5250
10	Levon Aronian	73.08	2749	$5250
11	R. Praggnanandhaa	70.28	2664	$4250
12	Nodirbek Abdusattorov	56.41	2651	$4250
13	Jan-Krzysztof Duda	77.01	2700	$4250
14	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	74.39	2724	$4250
15	Hans Niemann	75.39	2624	$3750
16	Alexandra Kosteniuk	76.31	2446	$750

DAVID ANDERTON, 2ND AUGUST 1941 – 1ST APRIL 2022

A GREAT FORCE OF GOOD IN ENGLISH CHESS

By IM Shaun Taulbut

David Anderton was born in Walsall, Staffordshire on 2nd August 1941. Throughout his life he had a strong positive influence on the development of chess in England, both as an organiser and a player, including club and county chess, 4NCL and the English Seniors international team.

Stewart Reuben's obituary of David Anderton, published on the ECF website notes the following achievements: OBE for services to chess in 1977; President of the BCF 1979-82 (at that time the post included Chief Executive); ECF FIDE Delegate for many years, then a member of the FIDE Executive Board 1989-93; Captained the English chess team for 20 years; BCF/then ECF Honorary Life Vice President; Received the ECF President's award for Services to Chess in 2009 when he stepped down as the ECF legal expert. Anderton won the British 60+ Championships five times.

Reuben notes that Anderton played about 50 competitive games a year. He played for years every Thursday at Pleck Working Men's Club, along with his schoolteacher second wife, Doreen… He was an assiduous collector and had a huge chess library.

Anderton was taught chess by his father at the age of five. His first big step was becoming the School Champion of Tettenhall College. In 1979 he was Midlands Champion.

Throughout his career, he helped get many sponsors to support British chess.

Outside of chess, Anderton was a solicitor, working for Anson's law firm as the head of Regulatory Law. From 1977 he also served as a Deputy District Judge.

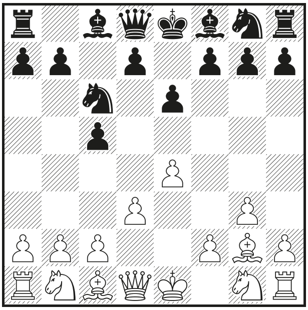
David Anderton's funeral was held on 4th May at The Streetly Crematorium in Walsall.

Here is a famous win by David against Tony Miles.

Anthony J **Miles** - David W **Anderton**

Staffordshire Open 1971

1.e4 e6 2.d3 c5 3.g3 ♘c6 4.♗g2



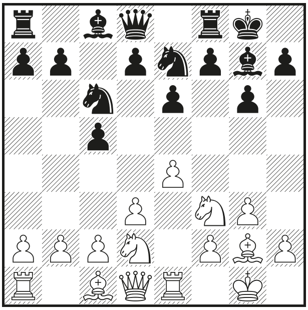
White plays the Kings Indian Attack against the Sicilian Defence

4...g6 A good choice aiming for control of the dark squares; 4...d5 is also worth consideration here.

5.♘f3 ♗g7 6.0-0 ♘ge7 7.♘bd2 Alternatives for White are 7.c3 0-0 8.♖e1 *(8.♗e3 b6 9.♘bd2 d5)* and 7.c4 d5 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♘c3.

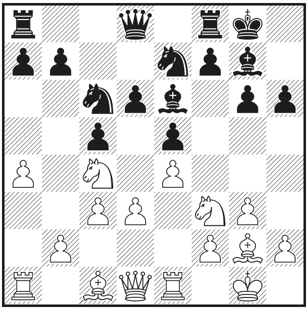
Sir Stuart Milner-Barry accepts his prize from David W Anderton (right)
Published in the November 1976 issue of BCM, from the Lloyds Bank Trophy Telex Match London-New York

7...0-0 8.♖e1



8...e5 Black chooses to gain control of the dark squares; also 8...d5 9.e5 b6 10.♕e2 h6 is satisfactory for Black but less combative.

9.♘c4 d6 10.a4 h6 11.c3 ♗e6



Black has an easier development with his extra space and control of the centre.

12.♖b1 12.a5 ♗xc4 13.dxc4 ♘xa5 14.♗f1 is a reasonable pawn sacrifice; White has compensation with his two bishops.

12...f5 Black has a small edge as he can advance with ...f4 on the kingside.

13.♕e2 Protecting the knight on c4 so White could recapture on e4 with the d pawn after exchanges on e4.

13...♖c8 Black prevents Whites expansion with b4.

14.b3 Not 14.b4 cxb4 15.cxb4 fxe4 16.dxe4 ♘d4 wins because the knight on c4 is hanging.

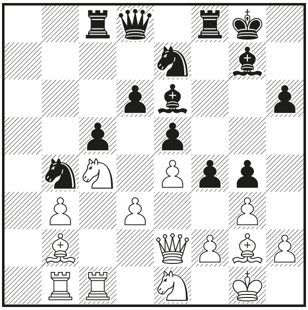
14...a6 15.♗b2 b5 16.axb5 axb5 17.♘cd2 b4 17...f4 is strong here going immediately for an attack.

18.cxb4 Better is 18.exf5 ♘xf5 19.c4 ♖a8 20.♖a1 when White can hold the position.

18...♘xb4 White now has to spend time on the queenside on the pawns on b3 and d3.

19.♘c4 f4 Black now starts a Kingside advance while White is tied up defending the weak pawns on b3 and d3.

20.♖ec1 g5 21.♘e1 g4

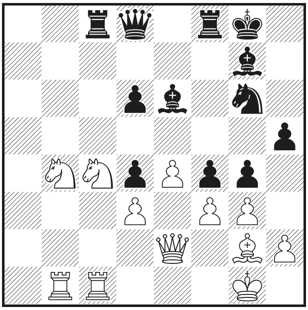


With the deadly threat of f3 so White is almost compelled to block himself with f3 which weakens the e3 square.

22.f3 h5 23.♘c2 ♘bc6 Black is worried about swapping on b4 but could have continued 23...♘g6 and if 24.♘xb4 cxb4 25.fxg4 ♗xg4 26.♕d2 f3 27.♗h1 f2+ 28.♔f1 ♘h4 29.gxh4 ♕xh4 winning; 23...♘xc2 24.♖xc2 ♘g6 is also strong.

24.♗c3 ♘g6 25.b4 cxb4 26.♘xb4 ♘d4 Also 26...fxg3 27.hxg3 gxf3 28.♗xf3 ♕g5 is very strong eg 29.♖f1 h4 30.♘xc6 ♖xc6 31.g4 ♘f4 32.♕d2 ♗xg4.

27.♗xd4 exd4



28.♖f1 ♘e5 29.♘d2 29.♘xe5 dxe5 30.♘d5 is a better try exchanging pieces to blunt the Black attack.

29...♗h6 Black is now winning with threats of invasion on the dark squares.

30.♖b2 ♖c7 30...fxg3 31.hxg3 ♗e3+ 32.♔h1 h4 is winning.

31.♘d5 ♗xd5 32.exd5 fxg3 33.hxg3 ♗e3+ 34.♔h1 h4 Black opens the h-file decisively.

35.fxg4 hxg3 36.♖xf8+ ♕xf8 37.♗h3 ♕h6 38.♔g2 ♘g6 39.♔xg3 ♕xh3+ Black has other winning lines keeping the queens on eg a) 39...♕h4+ 40.♔h2 ♗f4+ 41.♔g1 ♕xh3 42.♘f1 *(42.♕e6+ ♔g7 43.♘f1 ♗e3+ 44.♘xe3 ♖c1+ 45.♔f2 dxe3+ 46.♕xe3 ♖f1+ 47.♔e2 ♕g2+ 48.♕f2 ♕xf2#)* 42...♗e3+ 43.♘xe3 ♘f4 44.♕f2 dxe3 45.♖b8+ ♔h7;

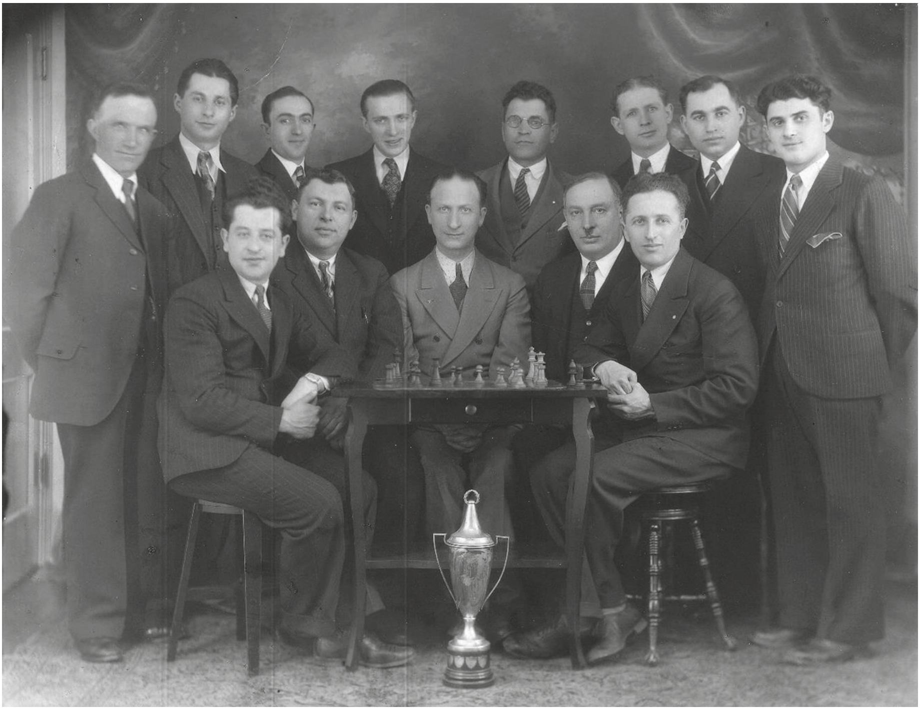
b) 39...♕f4+ 40.♔g2 ♘h4+ 41.♔h1 ♖c1+ 42.♘f1 ♕g3 43.♖b8+ ♔h7 44.♖b7+ ♔g6 45.♗g2 ♘xg2 46.♕xg2 ♕h4+ 47.♕h2 ♖xf1+ 48.♔g2 ♖f2+ 49.♔g1 ♕xh2#

40.♔xh3 ♘f4+ 41.♔g3 ♘xe2+ 42.♔f3 ♘c3

0-1

THE WINNIPEG JEWISH CHESS CLUB, ALEXANDER MOGLE AND GEORGE KOLTANOWSKI, CHAMPION OF BLINDFOLD CHESS

BY CELIA RABINOVITCH



PUBLISHED IN THE JEWISH HERITAGE CENTRE CONNECTS, APRIL 14 & APRIL 28, 2021

When the Jewish Heritage Center of Western Canada offered a program celebrating the history of Jews and chess in March, 2020, I recognized my Uncle Alec Mogle in a photograph of the Winnipeg Jewish Chess Club, 1937. Standing second from the left at the back, he is a handsome man with an animated expression. Alexander Mogle married my aunt Eleanor Robinson in 1961. We adored him - he was full of life and warmth, apparent in this photograph of Alec with my sister Sandra (right) and myself (left) at Passover Seder.

Dr. Paul Mogle, Alec's son who lives in Israel, confirmed not only was that his father, Alec, but that Mogle's Delicatessen on Main Street offered the Winnipeg Jewish Chess Club a homey atmosphere in the back. "*That is a picture of my father who was very active in the Jewish Chess Club. When he owned a delicatessen until 1943 the chess club was in the back. A large room with many chess tables.*"

A Jewish Post article of 1943 titled, ***Mrs. I. Korn Takes Over Delicatessen At 952 Main***, reports that, "*it will give the same satisfaction for which Mogle's was noted*." The article continues "*They will continue to do the same special catering to the members of the Chess club who meet in the rear of the store.*". Across from this story, the proud headline *Jewish Boys at War* records the names of Jewish servicemen at the British Commonwealth Air Training Program in Brandon and overseas in the RAF, and an appreciation by another (non-Jewish) serviceman stating that the Canadian Jewish Congress in Montreal offers the most hospitality of all of the servicemen's center. Today a modern building - the Carpathia Credit Union- replaces the building where Mogle's Deli once stood. [i]

During the 1930's the Winnipeg Jewish Chess Club at Mogle's Delicatessen invited important chess masters, among them Alexander Alekhine and Samuel Reshevsky to perform demonstrations and give talks. In 1938, they invited George Koltanowski, the self-named "world champion of blindfold chess" -- a showman and wit. Koltanowski's visit to Canada began on September 3, when he and his first wife, Céline arrived in Québec on the *SS Duchess Atholl*, after leaving Antwerp via Liverpool to on July 26, 1938. Koltanowski's North American chess tour began that September 16, 1938 in Québec City. The tour led to his eventual escape from World War II, when, as the captain of the Belgian Olympic Chess Team in 1939 while en route to the Olympics in Buenos Aires, Belgium's escalating military tensions with Germany forced its cancellation from the games that year. Koltanowski was left a stateless, wandering chess wizard. On his forced return, while playing in Havana, the US consul in Cuba witnessed his astounding prowess at blindfold chess. He offered him a visa in 1940. The Holocaust claimed many of his family in Antwerp shortly thereafter – a loss so profound that he could not speak of it during his lifetime.[ii]

Alec Mogle played chess with Koltanowski when the chess master visited Winnipeg on October 1 and 2, 1938. I knew Koltanowski's character well, having just completed *Duchamp's Pipe: A Chess Romance – Marcel Duchamp and George Koltanowski* (North Atlantic Press: Berkeley, 2020). The book uncovers the long chess friendship between the Dadaist artist Duchamp and the irrepressible chess champion. Koltanowski's vaudevillian Jewish humor appeared in chess anecdotes and quips in his talks and books. In that match in Winnipeg, two effervescent spirits encountered. Alec Mogle was born in Russia, and embodied a similar old-world warmth and confidence as Koltanowski. They both spoke Russian and could converse and joke in other languages. Koltanowski autographed a book for Alec in that visit, later dedicating it to Alec's son Paul in 1946. (Below Left- Alec Mogle, right, George Koltanowski, c. 1941)

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[i] The Jewish Post, Vol XIX No. 28 July 15 1943 pp 4 5

[ii] For Koltanowski's ocean journeys, see www.duchampspipe.com/voyages.
For more on Koltanowski, see Celia Rabinovitch, Duchamp's Pipe: A Chess Romance – Marcel Duchamp & George Koltanowski, (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2020).

The following day, October 2, 1938, Koltanowski gave a talk at the Jewish Chess Club. Koltanowski's *Adventures of a Chess Master*[iii] excerpts a column from the Winnipeg Tribune. Asked if his wife played chess, he said he never plays chess with his wife. "*She is a very poor player. It is better for the peace of the family*."(Koltanowski apparently changed his attitude when he married Leah Greenberg in 1947 in New York. Leah assisted in his chess ventures and joked about his forgetfulness.**)** Koltanowski said his worst worry was "*remembering previous games while he is playing multiple sets of games*." Later, Leah remarked that he didn't remember to bring home the groceries.

Paul Mogle recounts:
*Just wanted to let you know that I met him (Koltanowski) when I was a boy. He came to our house for dinner and autographed a book he had written initially to my father and then years later to me with the hope that he would meet me sometime over a chess board. I was not encouraged by my father to play chess as he said it was a waste of time though he was a champion player having won the city championship three times in a row and was given the cup permanently. It now resides with his oldest grandson Alex***.**

Alec Mogle was reluctant to introduce his son to chess because he wanted to protect him from the absorbing seductions of the game. He echoes the words of the American chess prodigy, Paul Morphy (1837-1834), who wrote, "*The ability to play chess is the sign of a gentleman. ...The ability to play chess well is the sign of a wasted life.*" (1863.) George Bernard Shaw condemned chess as "*a foolish expedient for making idle people believe they are doing something very clever, when they are only wasting their time*." (1880).

Writing in the Tribune of October 2, 1938, Denny Brown describes Koltanowski's Winnipeg event: "*Chess Expert Amazes Local Stars by Skill*," opening with "*A group of Winnipeg chess experts and layman watched in wonder Saturday afternoon while one man, with his back to the opposition, pitted his skill against 12 of the city's best players in a six-table simultaneous*

[iii] George Koltanowski, (Adventures of a Chess Master, Philadelphia: D. MacKay, 1955)

Tournament." The article notes that he lectured at the Jewish Chess Club later that afternoon. The Manitoba Chess Association invited Winnipeg's champion chess players to compete, including the stars of the Winnipeg Jewish Chess Club, Dr. I. Shankman, who won against Koltanowski, and Alec Mogle (former champion of the province and the city) who played the master to a draw.[i]

Alex Mogle's chess trophy *Source: www.jhcwc.org*

Historically, the young men of the Winnipeg Jewish Chess Club mirror the chess players of Koltanowski's youth who participated in *le Cercle Maccabi d'Anvers* – the Jewish Chess Club of Antwerp. In the early 20th century, Jews needed their own clubs to compete, as they were not accepted into other sports clubs. Jewish sporting clubs arose throughout Europe, a product of pride in their modernity and solidarity in their heritage, including the *Cercle Maccabi* where young Koltanowski competed. Koltanowski described his crew as "*a roving pack of Antwerp chess-wolves*", ready to match the best. In 1921, Koltanowski became the Champion of Antwerp.

The Winnipeg Jewish chess players were eager to show their mettle. Most were emigres whose passage to Canada asserted a courageous rebuke to economic and cultural hardship. Many of them came from Russia and Eastern Europe. Their Winnipeg club reflected a powerful sense of self-acceptance and strength. Entering Mogle's Delicatessen on Main Street, absorbing the pungent fragrances of corned beef, rye, pickles and other tasty provisions, the Winnipeg Jewish chess players were at home. They included notable players such as Abe Helmann, (Russia 1907-1952) a close friend of Alec Mogle who later became a star in the Vancouver chess scene, Alexander Mogle, (Russia 1903-1966); Abe Yanofsky (Poland 1925-2000); Dave Creemer (Russia 1902-1953); Frank Atnikov (1906-1991) Joe Dreman (1910-2000), and the mathematician Leo Moser (Austria 1921-1970).

In *Adventures of a Chess Master*, Koltanowski observes that chess creates true friendships. "Chess players do not become rich, not by a long shot, but this chess player has been amply repaid in more than mere wealth. This book is in the way of tribute to the great number of fine friends I have made all over the world, men and women who have found, as I have, that chess transcends all barriers and creates true friendships." Koltanowski lived by the exchange through the love of chess. He knew this easy "give and take" from the diamond exchange in Antwerp, and from the central covenant of his Jewish heritage, whose personal covenant with God was the basis for relationships between people.

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[i] Rabinovitch, Duchamp's Pipe: A Chess Romance, p. 50-52

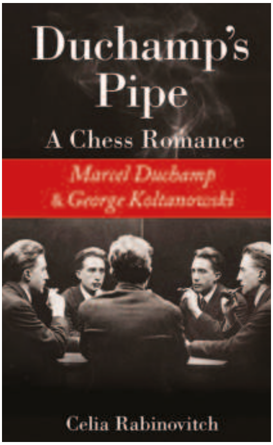
A 1992 interview of chess player Joe Dreman (by Albert Boxer) in the Manitoba Chess Association Publication, illustrates the passion and determination of the Winnipeg Jewish Chess Club:

"I learned to play chess very late in life. I was eighteen years old and I taught myself the game from an article I read in the 'Book of Knowledge' I was short of money at the time, so I made a chess board and men from cardboard. This was in 1928.

"I was inspired to do this when I read a headline in the Winnipeg Free Press, which stated Building Burns, Players refuse to leave*'. The fire was in the People's Book Store on Main St., then the home of the Winnipeg Jewish Chess Club. 'This is the game for me', I thought, and I joined the club that same year."*

The early 20th century ethnologist, Marcel Mauss wrote about the covenant embodied in the exchange. He was the nephew of sociologist Émile Durkheim, who descended from three generations of rabbis. Mauss's investigation of "the gift" proposes that "souls are mixed with things; things with souls. Lives are mingled together…"[ii]

In Israel, Alex Mogle has the book signed by Koltanowski to his grandfather and his father. He proudly displays his grandfather's Alexander Mogle's championship cup with the years 1924, 1930, and 1933 emblazoned on it.



Celia Rabinovitch is an artist, writer and professor whose recent book, *Duchamp's Pipe: A Chess Romance - Marcel Duchamp & George Koltanowski* is available at major outlets.

Learn more about her book at www.duchampspipe.com and art
https://soulgallery.ca/collections/celia-rabinovitch
https://soulgallery.ca/

[ii] Marcel Mauss, ***The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*** (London: Routledge, 1990), 25–26.

THE GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

By Grandmaster Raymond Keene OBE

This month's column continues the theme of the King March, adumbrated in the February BCM review of the new book by Seirawan and Harper.

One of the strangest games I have ever played... the opening leads to a standard squeeze position - then Black sheds a pawn but gets a few tricks - so I had to consolidate - finally I reach queen and bishop endgame where I have to break through. My first plan was to march the king to the queenside and break through on the kingside - then I thought it might be easier to break through on the queenside so I marched the king back again. Then I realised I had been right the first time so I walked the king over to the queenside again before making the decisive g4 thrust - however, having been there twice before I had to march my king along a route the third time round which avoided threefold repetition.

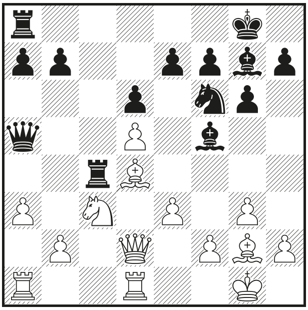
My opponent was incredibly pissed off at the end of the game. In spite of the length of the game - somewhat artificially expanded by my opponent's dogged refusal to resign - this was the British Championship I won, where the reporter for the BCM, Ritson Morry, accused me of short draws!

Raymond **Keene** - Eric J **Holt A04**

BCF-ch Blackpool ENG (3), 11.08.1971

1.♘f3 g6 2.d4 c5 3.c3 ♗g7 4.g3 cxd4 5.cxd4 ♘f6 6.♗g2 0-0 Black could make life easier for himself by playing the symmetrical 7...d5.

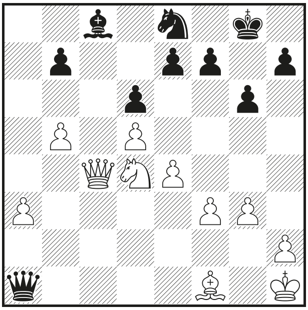
7.0-0 d6 8.♘c3 ♘c6 9.d5 ♘b4 10.a3 ♘a6 11.♘d4 ♕b6 12.♘b3 ♘c5 13.♘xc5 ♕xc5 14.♗e3 ♕a5 15.♗d4 ♗d7 16.♕d2 ♖fc8 17.♖fd1 ♖c4 18.e3 ♗f5



This position sets the theme for the whole game. At periodic intervals the black pieces seem to generate activity in successive waves, and on each occasion White's strategic imperative is to drive them back.

19.b3 ♖cc8 20.e4 ♗g4 21.f3 ♗d7 22.♔h1 ♘e8 23.b4 ♕d8 24.♗xg7 ♔xg7 25.♘e2 ♕b6 26.♖dc1 ♔g8 27.♘d4 a5 28.♖xc8 ♗xc8 29.b5 a4 Eventually this pawn proves to be a source of weakness and it falls.

30.♖c1 ♗d7 31.♗f1 ♖c8 32.♖xc8 ♗xc8 33.♕b4 ♕c5 34.♕xa4 ♕c1 35.♕c4 ♕a1

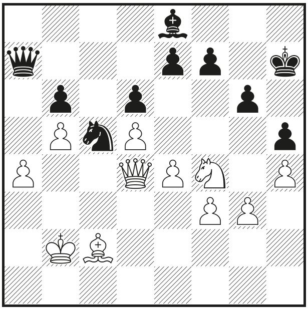


The presence of the black queen in White's camp is a persistent source of irritation, so my next task is to drive it out and consolidate.

Now begins White's first long march with the king.

36.♔g2 ♗d7 37.a4 ♘f6 38.♗e2 h5 39.♘c2 ♕c1 40.♘d4 ♕a1 41.♘c2 ♕c1 42.h4 ♔h7 43.♗f1 ♕d2+ 44.♕e2 ♕a5 45.♕c4 ♕d2+ 46.♔g1 ♕c1 47.♔f2 ♕d2+ 48.♗e2 ♗h3 49.♕d3 ♕a5 50.♕d4 ♘d7 51.♕b4 ♕c7 At last the black queen has been expelled.

52.♕c4 ♕b6+ 53.♕d4 ♘c5 54.♘e3 ♕a5 55.♗d1 ♗d7 56.♗c2 ♔g8 57.♔e2 ♕c7 58.♕b4 b6 59.♔d2 ♗e8 60.♕d4 ♗d7 61.♕c3 ♕a7 62.♕b4 ♔h7 63.♘g2 ♗e8 64.♘f4 ♕d7 65.♔c1 ♕c8 66.♔b2 ♕d7 67.♕d4 ♕a7

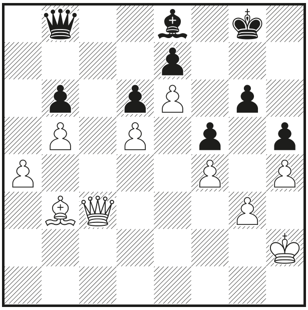


The first long, long trek from h1 to b2 has been completed. The next step in the winning plan is to trade or dislodge the black blockading knight on c5.

68.♘d3 ♘xd3+ 69.♕xd3 ♔g8 70.♕c3 ♗d7 71.f4 ♕b8 72.e5 ♔h7 73.♕e3 ♗e8 74.e6 f5 Considerable progress has been made with White's e6 pawn slicing through Black's camp.

75.♕c3 ♔g8 76.♗b3 ♕d8 I had intended to organise a kingside breakthrough, so I felt my king would be safest on the queen's flank. Here, though, I experienced a change of heart, going for a queenside push. For that purpose the white king is most secure on the kingside. Hence I retraced my steps, being careful to avoid a repetition.

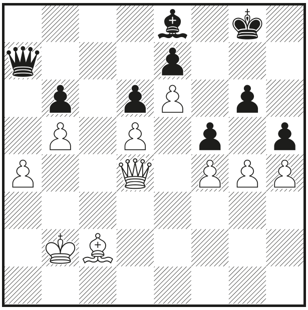
77.♔c2 ♕b8 78.♔d2 ♕d8 79.♔d3 ♕b8 80.♔c4 ♕a7 81.♔d4 ♕b8 82.♔e3 ♕d8 83.♔f3 ♕b8 84.♔g2 ♕d8 85.♔h1 ♕b8 86.♔h2 More or less back where I had started (h2 rather than h1). However, having achieved my objective, I felt that an advance on the queenside would be less effective than the original strategy of an offensive against the black king. For that reason, my king should be on the opposite flank from where it now finds itself.



86...♕d8 Black, Scottish champion at the time, can do nothing but shuffle his pieces. Now comes the commencement of the third and final march, but I had finally envisioned a crystal clear and concrete process for annihilating Black's defensive carapace.

87.♔g2 ♕b8 88.♔f2 ♕d8 89.♔e1 ♕b8 90.♔d1 ♕b7 91.♔c1 ♕b8 92.♔b1 ♕b7 White's king is about to reach its ideal square in order for White to launch the final operation.

93.♔b2 ♔h7 94.♕d4 ♔g8 95.♗c2 ♕a7 96.g4



I liked the following comment which I found on chessgames.com ('scormus'): "96. g4!! proved too tough a find for my engine, but "agrees" that would be winning. It says much for the keenness of W's vision that he saw it. After 96. g4, 96...hxg4 proved not the best defence, since 97. h5 forces ... gxh5 (... ♕a5 or g3 98. h6 lead to mate on h8). Then the game continuation ensues. 96...fxg4 would seem at first sight to be weaker, since it immediately vacates f5. But it is actually the best defence since W then does not have the immediate threats from the h-pawn. After 97. f5 Black has time for ... ♕a5. White appears to still have a sufficient advantage to get the win, but it's harder work. White has to deal with an active queen bishop and the advanced g-pawn. "In fact, after 96...fxg4 the win for White still requires some intricate footwork, namely: 97. f5!! ♕a5 98. fxg6 ♕e1 99. g7 g3 100. ♔b3 (to avoid checks and refute 100...g2 with 101.♕f4) ♕e5 101.♕xe5 dxe5 102.Be4 ♔xg7 103.a5 ♗xb5 104.axb6 ♗a6 105.♔b4 ♗b7;

106.♔c3 ♗a6 (or 106...♔f6 107.♔d3 g2 108.♗xg2 ♔f5 109.♔e3 e4 110.♔d4 e3 111.♗f3 ♔f4 112.♗xh5) 107.♔d2 ♔f8 108. ♔e3 ♔e8 109. ♔f3 g2 110. ♔xg2 ♔d8 111.♔g3 ♗c8 112. ♗f3, winning. Ironically, in order to clinch the victory, I would have been obliged to carry out a fourth and final regal anabasis back to the king's side.

96...hxg4 97.h5 gxh5 98.♗xf5 g3 99.♗c2 g2 100.♕f2 ♔f8 101.♕xg2 ♕a5 102.♕e4 ♗xb5 Black could have safely resigned instead of struggling on.

103.axb5 ♕xb5+ 104.♗b3 ♔e8 105.♕a4 ♕xa4 106.♗xa4+ ♔f8 107.♗d1 h4 108.♗g4 ♔g7 109.♔b3 ♔h6 110.♔b4 h3 111.♗xh3 ♔h5 112.♔b5 ♔h4 113.♔xb6 ♔xh3 114.f5 ♔g4 115.f6 exf6 116.e7 f5 117.e8♕ f4 118.♕e6+ ♔g3 119.♕xd6 ♔g4 120.♕g6+ ♔f3 121.d6 ♔e2 122. d7 f3 123.♕e4+ ♔f2 124.d8♕ ♔g3 125.♕g5+ ♔f2 126.♕gh4+ ♕ee3+ would have been faster, but by this stage, no one was counting!

126...♔g1 127.♕ee1+ ♔g2 128.♕ef2#

1-0

Chess and copyright: Framework fixing

By Peter O’Brien

Chess is a business and is part of the wonderful world of Sports and Games (SG). Ferocious competition is one of the defining characteristics of SG - and, where competition exists, rules defining what constitutes fair competition, and hence ways of circumventing those rules, loom large. Often the rules that matter come from within the activity itself. There’s no need to look further than last year’s epic struggle between Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen for the driver’s F1 world title to see how a single person’s interpretation of a racing rule can affect a result and cause millions of dollars to shift in one direction or another. Sometimes it’s a specific national regulation that plays a critical role. The very recent dispute regarding whether or not Novak Djokovic would be allowed to defend his Australian Open title is a perfect example. On other occasions the things that matter are broad points of law that affect what can or cannot be legally protected and thereby have the potential to raise revenue.

All three kinds of ‘framework fixing’ laws and rules influence outcomes in the chess world. Again, examples from the past few weeks are there. Ding Liren was apparently unable to play in the first leg of the Grand Prix in Berlin because he could not obtain a visa for Germany. I am certainly not privy to details of why this was the case (though given that the superb Chinese champion has played in numerous countries over the past few years, the ‘why’ question certainly needs a proper answer). But the fact is that the player whom many, despite ‘Firouzja fever’, would consider the most likely challenger to Carlsen for the world title has effectively been ruled out by the visa decision. He has not been defeated over the board. He has been defeated by laws/rules, presumably those of Germany. Daniel Dubov ran into ‘mask trouble’ during January’s Wijk aan Zee tournament and thereby lost several games by default.

On 28 January last, a judge in the California Central District Court ruled that Netflix could be sued for defamation concerning the accusation by Nona Gaprindashvili that her reputation had been sullied by statements made in the final episode of the series 'The Queen's Gambit'. The legendary Georgian champion had underlined that, contrary to the Netflix implication, she had in fact played against a wide range of top-level male chess players including no fewer than three world champions. She is suing Netflix for $5m.

The judge said that 'the fact that the series was a fictional work does not insulate Netflix from liability for defamation if all the elements for defamation are otherwise present'. The judge further noted that there was no evidence of any cases 'precluding defamation claims for the portrayal of real-life persons in otherwise fictional works'. The ruling of the judge on that day clearly has implications going way beyond chess.

It remains to be seen how the Gaprindashvili case will eventually end, whether via legal decision or through out-of-court agreements. Either way, future presentations of chess players (and countless others) and their achievements will have to be accurately crafted even in works of fiction.

Unlike many other sports and games, chess only slowly developed its own associations, national and international, which could establish rules, regulations and procedures that would govern how major championships would be organized. While chess Olympiads, separate from and not to be confused with the Olympic Games, started a century ago, these team competitions were not paralleled by a similar organization for personal titles. Indeed, it was not until after 1945 that the Soviet Union, by then clearly having the largest number of strong players in the world, suggested that it should draft a series of rules that would govern how competitions for determining a world champion would be organised. Up till then, the scope for individual dispute on such matters was wide open. While the subsequent 60 years of Soviet/Russian control of the world title (punctuated only briefly by the Fischer incident) avoided disputes among players of different nationalities, there was still scope for tensions within the Soviet school.

On 28 January last, a judge in California ruled that Netflix could be sued for defamation concerning the accusation by Nona Gaprindashvili regarding 'The Queen's Gambit'

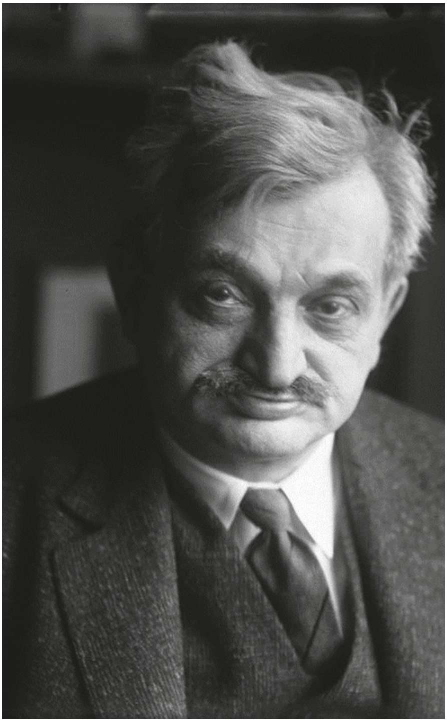
Conflicts among the leading lights of the game have been a constant feature of the commercial horizon. Let's start in the mid-19th century. Although north-western Europe had, till that time, been essentially irrelevant to the history of the game, the then leading English player, Howard Staunton, took up the torch of regularising the rules of the game. This involved in particular prevailing upon the exceptionally gifted Italian Seferino Dubois to ensure that the unusual rules then governing the game in the Italian states were altered to conform with those being used elsewhere. Dubois not only obliged, but actually played in the famous London tournament of 1851 under the more standard rules. The rule differences were by no means negligible, since they included alternative ways of castling and of managing pawn promotions.

As in most dimensions of life, chess stars, and the organisers of chess events, have always been zealous guardians of their reputations and accomplishments. Copyright has been and indeed remains a central issue. Along with other figures of intellectual property law (such as patents or trademarks), copyright law is complex and necessarily evolves over time. Much as I confess to a deep interest in the field, for reasons connected with my own professional work, I will try to focus on specific issues that have arisen in relation to chess.

At the outset, a couple of things need to be kept in mind. First, copyright law does not provide protection for ideas, procedures or processes. Thus you cannot claim copyright on the rules for playing the game - though if you have a special or artistic way of depicting them, you might well obtain copyright protection for that. Second, important matters to consider in granting a copyright application include originality, authorship and fixing.

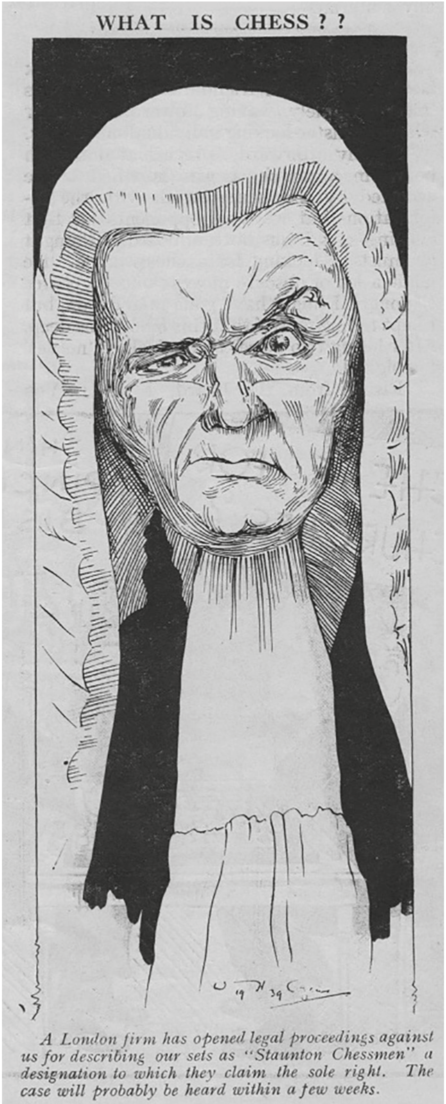
With regard to chess (and indeed virtually all SG), authorship and fixation are most important. Chess involves at least two people and/or computers duelling over the board - hence there is at least a joint authorship of the actual moves of the game. Thus the famed world champion Emanuel Lasker never succeeded in his many attempts to claim 'ownership' of the moves of a game in which he had been a participant. In negotiations (which ultimately failed) back in 1911 for a world title match against Capablanca, the Cuban firmly rejected Lasker's attempts to have an 'ownership' clause inserted into a potential contract. To the best of this author's knowledge, none of Lasker's tries ever made it to the courts (he himself probably knew that the law would not protect him).

Fixing, as applied to chess, also links to the game itself. By definition the outcome is not known in advance. Hence, unlike say a theatre piece, there is nothing which can be 'fixed' in advance and thereby become an item potentially covered by copyright law. Nowadays, in fact, we have several examples of identical games being played at different times and places. Convergence of interest in particular kinds of positions certainly increases the possibility that this will occur, despite the countervailing factor of electronic diffusion of games. The message is clear. Chess games do not satisfy the fixation criterion.


The famed world champion Emanuel Lasker never succeeded in his many attempts to claim 'ownership' of the moves of a game in which he had been a participant (Source: Wikipedia.org)

To focus on copyright cover attempts by players alone does not exhaust the field. Why? Because organisers and promoters naturally also seek to maximise their returns for their efforts. The first real international chess tournament took place in London in 1851. The organisers made contracts with certain newspapers for the exclusive publication of the games upon payment of fees to the organisers. In effect, the latter were relying upon the so-called ‘sweat of the brow’ dimension of copyright. This kind of argument says that even if there is no originality at all, the effort and cost going into the creation of the conditions in which the games were produced merit some recompense. The games, being established facts once completed and in the public domain, could have been published by anyone. The contracts, in other words, could have been challenged by the simple device of other media outlets publishing the games without making any payment to the organisers of the London tournament. Again, to the best of my knowledge (readers, please help!) no such challenges in the legal domain occurred.

The organiser impact has, however, come through in the legal field far more recently. In 2016, in the context of the world title match that year, the organisers of the match brought a lawsuit in Russia against Chess 24 for showing the moves of the match live. The organisers asserted that this was a breach of their rights regarding transmission. This plea by the organisers was rejected by the Commercial Court of the City of Moscow. The Court argued that the moves, once played, were effectively in the public domain and no ‘property rights’ could be claimed. More or less at the same time in the USA a similar case was brought against Chess 24. In the American courts the issue was considered in the context of doctrines regarding ‘Hot News Misappropriation’ and the plaintiff’s claims were likewise rejected.



WHAT IS CHESS ? ?

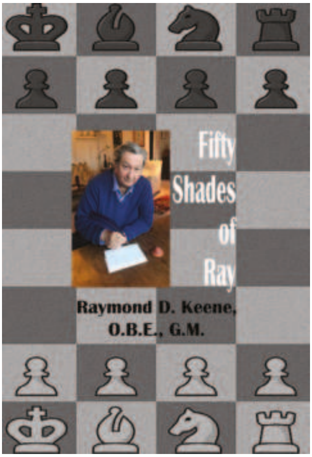
A London firm has opened legal proceedings against us for describing our sets as “Staunton Chessmen” a designation to which they claim the sole right. The case will probably be heard within a few weeks.

It’s clear that Hot News Misappropriation is a critical area for chess right now. And it’s by no means a simple domain. Indeed, under US law the issue came up just over a century ago. Around the end of the 1914-1918 War, Associated Press (AP) had developed a sophisticated wiring system which allowed it to transmit rapidly the facts about how the war was going. Another media group, called International News Service (INS), found a way of ‘intercepting’ the AP information and diffusing it still more rapidly to the public. AP took the matter to the Supreme Court. In 1918 the Court ruled in favour of AP, but did not base its ruling on the information per se. Those were facts and thus in the public domain. The Supreme Court ruling instead switched the focus onto doctrines of ‘unfair competition’ and found that INS was effectively free-riding on efforts and investments made by AP.

Thanks to the internet and COVID, we are now in the first historical period in which fairly significant numbers of people can aspire to making a reasonable living out of chess. They can do so in numerous ways, of which playing is just one. The market explosion has come through all sorts of developments, from far wider (and more lucrative) sponsoring to methods of becoming a kind of influencer through chess. Each actor or group of actors is predictably seeking to stamp their own ‘brand’ on their fusion of chess with other things (whether that be Anna Rudolf in fashion or the Botez sisters and their recipe for scrambled eggs). Luckily, they can either promote games of their own, or of their followers, or alternatively talk about games played by the world’s best without running into any copyright issues and almost certainly sidestepping potential trademark conflicts. In short, the raw materials can be mined at virtually zero cost.

Will all this develop in a conflict-free way? Who knows? My guess, however, is that there will be more conflicts over reputations, rights and property. Even when markets are growing fast, as is the case for chess, the struggle for shares of the pie is always acute. All aspects of the rules ecosystem, from courts of law through chess authorities at international and national levels, to organisers and managers of significant chess events (whether physically or electronically held) can look forward to stresses and strains. Such is the price of growth!

Hardinge Simpole



is delighted to announce
the publication of

Fifty Shades
of Ray

Chess in the year of the
Coronavirus Pandemic

Raymond D. Keene

With an Introduction
by CJ de Mooi

The British Chess Magazine 2020-2021

Problem World Awards

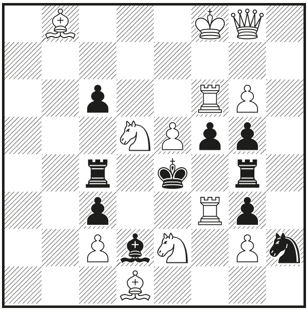
Award by Hans Gruber (D–Regensburg), International Judge of the FIDE

It is a pleasure to observe the continuous stream of good original problems being published in this traditional magazine which is devoted to all parts of the game of chess. Certainly a merit of the problem chess editor, Christopher Jones! Although I am afraid that composers may believe that I am already part of the inventory of this journal (who remembers who else last acted as a judge and when?), I am still enjoying studying the problems. (By the way, I searched my archives to find out when I lastly published in the BCM: In fact it was only one problem, a joint H#4 with the late Denis Blondel and with Hilmar Ebert, in January 1986!)

In this tournament, a total of 92 problems (of which one was anticipated) had to be considered, four problems every month except IX/2020, when the previous award was published. As in previous tournaments, I am grateful to Wieland Bruch who checked the originality of the twomovers, and to Ulrich Ring with whom I had inspiring conversations about some of the helpmates.

1ST PRIZE:

Abdelaziz Onkoud, BCM V/2021



#3 C+ 12+10

1.♖d3 [2.♕e6 [3.♕×f5#] ♖d4/♖f4 3.♖×d4/♘×g3#]

1.♖b4 2.♖e3+ ♗×e3 3.♘d×c3#

1.♗c1 2.♖d4+ ♖×d4 3.♘e×c3#

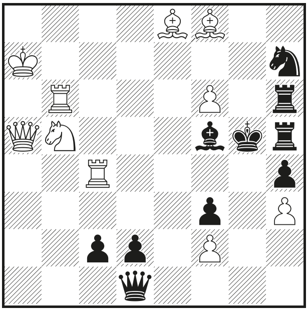
1.♘f1 2.♘e×c3+ ♖×c3,♗×c3 3.♗f3#

1.c5 2.♘d×c3+ ♖×c3,♗×c3 3.♕d5#

The good key activates an excellent quiet threat. In the two main variations, Black's defences are threatening a check, but Black loses one of two controls of the square c3. This is utilised by a white sacrifice which removes the second control and provides a black self-block so that a knight (the right one!) can mate on c3. In the other variations, again care is required in selecting which knight captures at c3, but now in the second white move! This is a highly intricate scheme with thematic action both in the second and third white moves. This saves the top place in the tournament, although Rf6 and Bd1 are not much used.

2ND PRIZE:

David Shire, BCM X/2020



#2 C+ 10+10

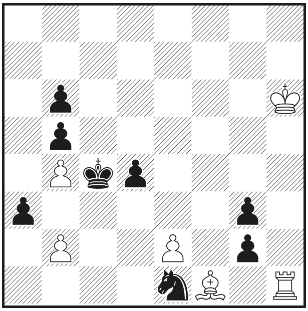
1.♘a3? [2.♖g4#] ♘×f6!

1.♘d6? [2.♕×f5#, not 2.♖g4]
♖×f6/♔×f6 2.♖g4/♘e4#, but 1.- ♕a1!
1.♘d4? [2.♕×f5#] ♕a1/♔f4
2.♘×f3/♘e6#, but 1.- ♖×f6!
1.♘c7! [2.♖g4#] ♘×f6/♕g1
2.♘e6/♕×d2#

This looks like a threat correction problem, but it is not, because the pattern of threats is A-B-B-A. Nevertheless there is a striking differentiation of mating threats. The paradoxical way in which black defences work or fail is very fine, and three white corrections contribute to a strong overall impression.

3RD PRIZE:

Christopher Jones, BCM XII/2021



H#3 2 solutions C+ 6+8

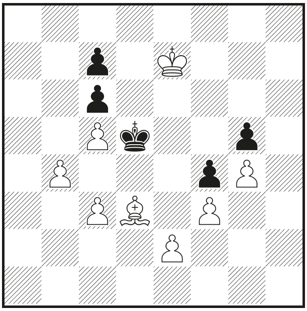
1.g×f1=♕ e3 2.♕d3 ♖h4 3.♕b3 ♖×d4#

1.g×h1=♕+ ♗h3 2.♕f3 b×a3 3.♕c3 ♗e6#

This problem is phantastically elegant so that it is really stunning that each white piece is captured in one of the solutions (and mates in the other, forming the Zilahi theme). It is paradoxical that Black in both solutions is promoting to queen. This ensures that all black moves must be thematic.

1ST HONOURABLE MENTION:

Paul Michelet, BCM V/2020



#9 C+ 8+5

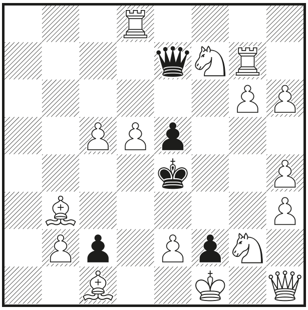
* 1.- ♔e5 2.♗h7 Zz. ♔d5 3.♗g8+ ♔e5 4.♔f7 Zz. ♔d5 5.♔f6#

1.♗a6 ♔e5 2.♗c8 ♔d5 3.♗e6+ ♔e5 4.♗f5 ♔d5 5.♗d3 etc. as set-play

After a precise 5-move sequence with a merry-go-round of the white bishop, we are back to the diagram position but with Black to play. In the following second phase (which is already present in the set-play), White performs a peri-Indian manoeuvre (Herlin). Black remains passive, thus the problems looks a bit traditional. The construction is good (the number of blocking pawns is reasonable).

2ND HONOURABLE MENTION:

Leonid Makaronez & Viktor Volchek,
BCM I/2021



#3 C+ 16+5

1.♔×f2 [2.♘e1+ ♔f5/♔d4 3.♕f3/♗e3#]

1.♕×c5+ 2.♘e3+ ♔d4/♔f4 3.♘f5/♕f3#

1.♕×h4+ 2.♘×h4+ ♔d4 3.♗e3#
1.♕f6+ 2.♘f4+ ♔f5/♔d4 3.e4/♗e3#

1.♕×f7+ 2.♘f4+ ♔f5/♔d4 3.♖×f7/♗e3#

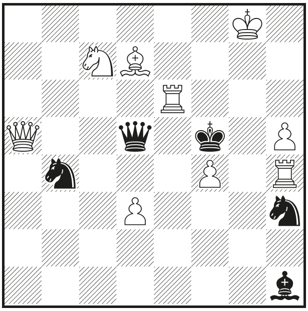
1.♔d4 2.♗e3+ ♔e4 3.♗×c2#
1.♔f5 2.♘e3+ ♔f4,♔f6 3.♕f3#

1.♕g5 2.♘×g5+ ♔f5/♔d4 3.♖f8/♗e3#

The key exposes the white king to four checks from the black queen. A fine construction, in particular with respect of the black force. The ♖g7 is a bit underemployed, and it has to be accepted that two mates (♗e3, ♕f3) recur quite often.

3RD HONOURABLE MENTION:

Kabe Moen, BCM VIII/2020



#2 C+ 9+5

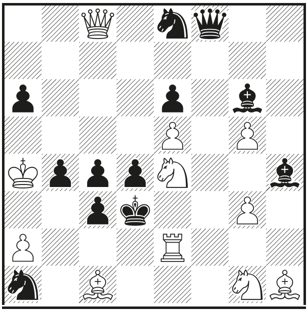
1.♕a1 [2.♕f6#] ♕d4/♕a8+/♕g2+ 2.♖d6/♖e8/♖g6#

1.- ♕×e6+/♕e5 2.♗×e6/♕×e5#

An excellent key which unpins the black queen which herself unpins the battery front-piece rook. Not too innovative, but shown in an elegant rendering.

4TH HONOURABLE MENTION:

Leonid Lyubashevsky &
Leonid Makaronez, BCM, IV/2021



#3 C+ 11+12

1.♕c6 [2.♘c5+ ♕×c5 3.♕f3#]
1.♗×g5 2.♗f4 [3.♘f2#] c2/♕×f4/♗×e4 3.♖d2/♘c5/♕×e4,♗×e4#

1.♘c2 2.♕d6 [3.♘c5#] ♗×e4/♕×d6 3.♗×e4/♘f2#

1.♘b3 2.a×b3 [3.♕×c4#] c×b3/♘d6 3.♕×a6/♘c5# (2.- ♕c5 3.♘f2,♘×c5#)

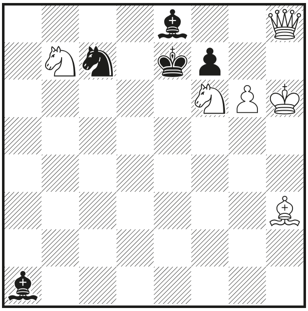
1.c2 2.♖d2+ ♔e3 3.♖d1#

The black queen is in a focal position which is utilised in excellent second white moves in the first two variations. It is a pity that the ♗h1 is a bit underemployed.

Commendations without ranking, in order of publication:

COMMENDATION:

John Rice, BCM I/2020



#2 C+ 6+5

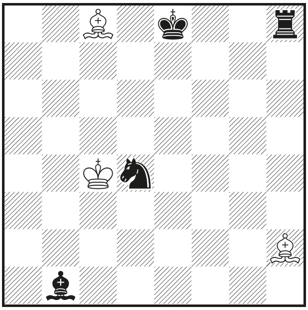
1.g7? [2.♘g8#] ♔×f6/♗×f6/♗e~ 2.g8=♘/♕f8/♕d8#, but 1.- ♘e6!

1.g×f7! [2.f8=♕#] ♔×f7/♗×f7/♘e6 2.♕g7/♕d8/f×e8=♕#

Old-fashioned, but excellent, with good keys in both phases and a lot of play from only 11 pieces.

COMMENDATION:

Kabe Moen, BCM IV/2020



H#3 b) -h8!a8 C+ 3+4

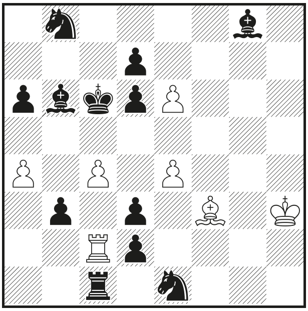
a) 1.0-0 ♗e6+ 2.♔h8 ♗f7 3.♗h7 ♗e5#

b) 1.♗f5 ♗a6 2.♗d7 ♗b5 3.0-0-0 ♗a6#

The ♗-a6-b5-a6 manoeuvre is quite unusual and appealing. I would not have expected that such innova-tion can still be found in such a familiar castling setting.

COMMENDATION:

Christopher Jones, BCM V/2020



H#3 2 solutions C+ 7+12

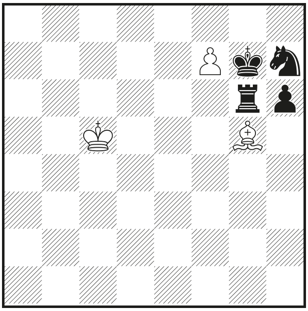
1.d5 c5 2.d4 e5+ 3.d5 c×d6 e. p.#

1.d×e6 ♗g4 2.e5 ♗c8 3.♗d5 c×d5#

Who could better comment than the author and editor of the column? “It turns out that the only way to neutralise the swarming defence is by engineering two double-check mates. But here not with a RB/BR battery! One of these uses a popular device - en passant capture - while the other lead to another mating capture by the c-pawn, which may be difficult to visualise from the diagram.” This is quite original.

COMMENDATION:

Jorma Pitkanen, BCM VIII/2020



H#2.5 4 solutions C+ 3+4

1.♔d5 2.♖e6 ♔×e6 3.♔f8 ♗×h6#

1.♗h4 2.♘g5 ♔d5 3.♔f6 f8=♕#

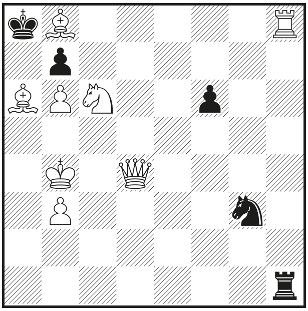
1.♗×h6+ 2.♔h8 f8=♕+ 3.♖g8 ♗g7#

1.f8=♖ 2.♘f6 ♗×f6+ 3.♔h7 ♖h8#

Shakespeare (slightly modified) would ask: “Chaos or creativity?” I plead for the latter. It is pleasing to study what happens to the white pawn. Once it is retained, once it promotes to rook, once it promotes to a mating queen, once it promotes to a passive, but pinning queen. A lovely ensemble.

COMMENDATION:

Michael Lipton, BCM XII/2020



#2 C+ 8+5

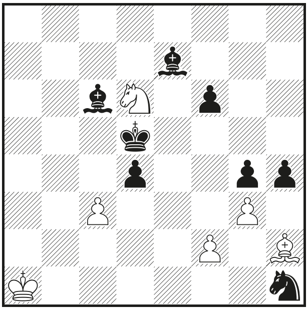
1.♕a1 [2.♗f1#] ♖d1/♖e1/♖h2/♖h5 2.♗d6/♗e5/♗e2/♗b5#

1.- ♖h4+/♘e2/b×c6/b×a6(/♖×a1) 2.♗c4/♗h2/b7/♕×a6(/♗b~)#

The author shows that much has been done with such patterns of interferences and line openings, but this setting deserves a commendation because it is rich and excellently constructed.

COMMENDATION:

Jozef Ložek, BCM VIII/2021



H#3 C+ 6+8

b) ♞h1→♘h1

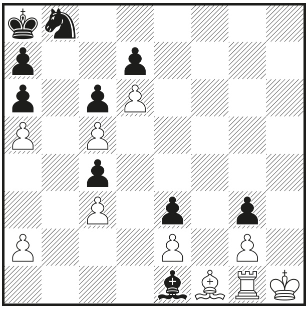
a) 1.♘×g3 f4 2.♘e4 f5 3.♘c5 c4#

b) 1.h×g3 ♘×g3 2.♔e6 ♘ge4 3.♗d5 ♘c5#

In each solution, the corner knight must move from h1 to c5, employing the identical route. The author recently has been experimenting with this interesting twinning mechanism (using a rook in feenschach 2021 and in Problem Paradise 2021, using a bishop in Die Schwalbe 2021).

COMMENDATION:

Ljubomir Ugren, BCM X/2021



H#17.5 C+ 10+10

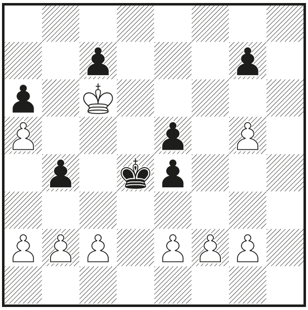
1.- a3 2.♗f2 a4 3.♗×g1 ♔×g1 4.♔b7 11.♔×c5 12.♔d5 13.c5 14.♘c6 ♔h1 15.♘e7 d×e7 16.♔c6 e8=♕

17.♔b7 ♕×d7+ 18.♔a8 ♕c8#

Who would have expected that there can be something new to discover in those very long helpmates? The knight's cage seems to be original, and the king's roundtrip is a nice surprise.

COMMENDATION:

Udo Marks, BCM XII/2021



#11 C+ 9+7

1.e3+ ♔c4 2.g6 (2.g3? g6!) Zz. b3 3.a×b3+ ♔b4 4.g3 Zz. ♔×a5 5.♔c5 Zz. c6 6.b4+ ♔a4 7.g4 Zz. a5

8.b5 Zz. c×b5 9.g5 Zz. b4 10.♔c4 Zz. b3 11.c×b3#

A wonderful and pleasing kindergarden problem with many tempo moves.

QUOTES AND QUERIES

FOUR MINIATURES

By Alan Smith

6216 Four miniatures this month. The first features a novelty on move four in the From Counter Gambit. This line can look inviting for black, but do not forget that white has the option of transposing into a King's Gambit at move two!

Vassily **Soldatenkov** - Eugene **Znosko-Borovski**

St Petersburg 1904

1.f4 e5 2.fxe5 d6 3.exd6 ♗xd6 4.♘f3 ♗g4 4...g5 5.d4 g4 6.♘e5 ♗xe5 7.dxe5 ♕xd1+ Bird - Lasker mg2 Newcastle 1892.

5.e4 ♘c6 6.♗b5 White could also try 6.d4 ♗xf3 7.gxf3 ♕h4+ 8.♔e2.

6...♘f6 7.0–0 te Kolste thought this was a miscalculation and recommended 7.d3 0-0 8.bxc6 bxc6 9.0-0 instead.

7...♘xe4! 8.♗xc6+ bxc6 9.♖e1 f5 10.d3 0–0 11.♗e3 11.dxe4 fxe4 12.♖xe4? ♗xh2+ te Kolste.

11...♗xf3 12.♕xf3 ♗xh2+ 13.♔xh2 ♕h4+ 14.♕h3 ♕xe1 15.dxe4 ♖ae8 16.♕g3? ♕xg3+ 17.♔xg3 f4+! 18.♗xf4 ♖e4 19. 0–1 19.♗xc7 ♖f1 20.♘d2 ♖e3+.

de Avondpost, 9th January 1905

The following game was played on Board One. Black was county champion a record 15 times.

Philip **Wallis** - Victor **Lovell**

Northamptonshire - Leicestershire 1934

1.♘c3 d5 2.e4 d4 This position could also arise from a Centre Counter.

3.♘ce2 3.♘b1 is also playable.

4.d3 c5 5.g3 ♘c6 6.♗g2 ♗d6 7.f4 f5? This is way too ambitious, 7...f6 was stronger.

8.exf5 ♗xf5 9.♘f3 e4? 10.♘h4 exd3 11.♘xf5 dxe2 12.♕xe2+ ♘ge7 13.♕e6! Much stronger than 13.♘xg7+.

13...♗c7 14.♘xg7+ ♔f8 15.♕f6+ ♔g8 16.♘e6!

1–0

Black can only avoid mate by giving up his queen, but he only gets a minor piece for it.

Leicester Evening Mail, 28th March 1934

The next game helped 14 year old Michael Adams win the Emigrant Cup.

Michael **Adams** - Jeremy **Menadue**

Cornwall ch, Truro 1986

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗g5 e6 7.f4 ♗e7 8.♕f3 ♕c7 9.0–0–0 ♘bd7 10.g4 b5 11.♗xf6 gxf6 11...♘xf6 12.g5 ♘d7 is the main line and the pawn sacrifice 11...♗xf6 12.♗xb5 ♖b8 is also playable. Fischer tried 11...gxf6 three times, scoring 50%.

12.f5 ♘e5 13.♕h3 0–0 14.♖g1 ♔h8 15.fxe6 A sensible move which appears to be a novelty. 15.♖g1 ♖g8 16.♘ce2 was played in Ivanovic - Jacimovic Yugoslavia ch 1985.

15...fxe6 16.♘ce2 ♘g6 17.♖g3 b4 18.♕h5 ♕c5 19.♘f5! A nasty surprise.

19...exf5 20.♖h3 ♖f7 21.♕xg6 ♗e6 22.♘f4 b3 23.axb3 ♗xb3 24.♗d3 ♗xc2 25.♕xf7 Black's flag fell, but he was lost anyway after 25...♗xd3+ 26.♔d2 ♕c2+ 27.♔e3.

1–0

West Briton and Cornwall Advertiser, 23rd January 1986

This game features a clever queen sacrifice.

Glenn **Flear** - Lubomir **Ftacnik**

Belgrade, 1988

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♘f3 ♗g7 5.♕b3 dxc4 6.♕xc4 0–0 7.e4 ♘a6 The Prins Variation.

8.♗g5 c5 9.d5 h6 10.♗h4 b5! First played by Rossetto in 1964.

11.♘xb5 ♕a5+ 12.♘d2 ♖b8 13.0–0–0? Castling into trouble, 13.a4 was essential.

13... ♘g4 14.♕b3 c4 15.♗xc4 ♗d7 16.a4 ♖fc8 17.♔b1 ♘c5 18.♕a3 ♕xa4 19.b3 ♗xb5! 20.bxa4 ♗xc4+ 21.♔c2 ♗d3+ 22.♕xd3 ♖b2+ 23.♔c1 ♘xd3 #

0–1

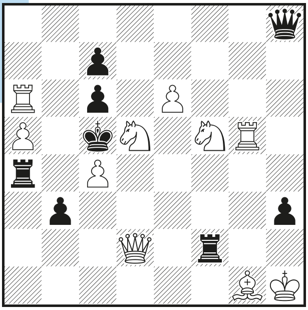
Birmingham Mail, 4th March 1989

PROBLEM WORLD

by Christopher Jones
cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk
Grandmaster of Chess Composition

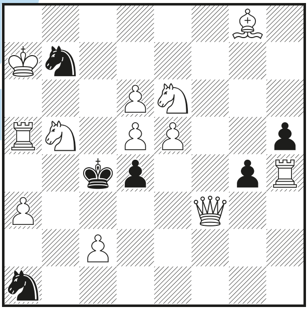
Solutions are given on page 318

1



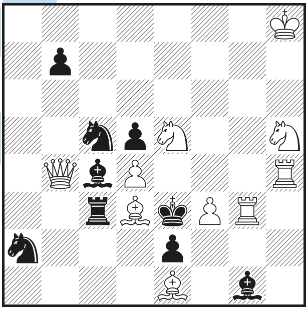
Kabe Moen (USA)
Mate in 2
ORIGINAL

2



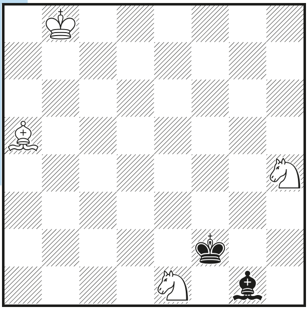
David Shire (Canterbury)
Mate in 2
ORIGINAL

3



John Rice (Surbiton)
Mate in 2
ORIGINAL

4

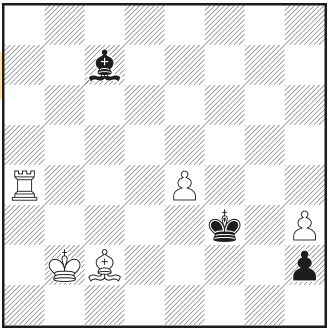


Stanislav Hudak (Slovakia)
Helpmate in 3 - 2 solutions
ORIGINAL

Endgame Studies

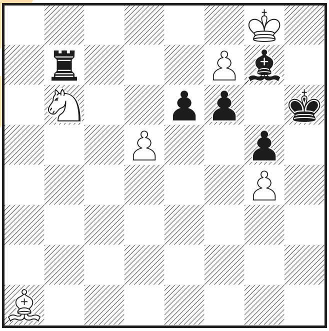
by Ian Watson
ian@irwatson.uk

1



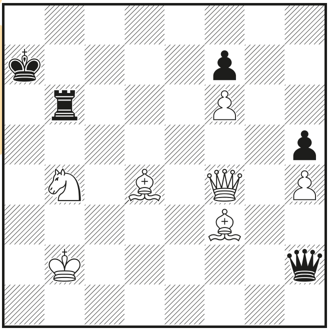
V. Korolkov
Shakhmaty v SSSR 1964
WIN

2



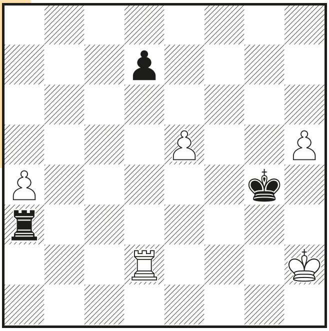
A. Bor & A. Herbstman
Shakhmaty v SSSR 1976
DRAW

3



K. Begley
California Chess Journal 2001
WIN

4



J. Polasek
Ceskoslovensky Sach 2001
WIN

May Solving Challenge

Solving has partly returned to physical events, as has ‘over-the-board’ chess. Nonetheless, online solving is here to stay. As, I guess, is online ‘OTB’ chess.

There was some ‘hybrid’ online/physical solving pre-COVID, notably the ISC, the International Solving Contest, in which competitors all across the world solve the same problems at the same time. The system is that competitors go to a local venue in their own country, and after solving they can compare their results with those of all the other competitors in other countries. Our first two studies this issue are from the ISC of January this year.

The BOOM Grand Prix online solving events are continuing, and our third and fourth studies are from the February BOOM event. The BOOM events are promoted by the British Chess Problem Society, and we are hoping this year to add some new online solving events entirely for study-solving. I’ll update you on that in this column; we are currently doing the first trials of the software.

All four of these studies were set for solving in the ‘Category 1’ ISC and BOOM competitions, which means the Category that the top solvers do; so, they are not easy! I’ll give you a few hints below.

This year’s first ‘Major’ of the physical solving circuit is the ECSC, the European Chess Solving Championship. It’s taking place in mid-May in Riga, Latvia, probably about when you read this column. There’s a team competition and an individual competition. Usually, the Russian team would be one of the favourites, but they have been banned from taking part by the WFCC, the World Federation for Chess Composition (the chess composition world’s equivalent of FIDE). That’s because of the Ukrainian conflict, of course. Ukraine has many chess solvers in addition to its strong tradition of chess composing. The ECSC was held in Kiev in 2012, and would have been held in Poltava, near Kharkiv, in 2020 but for COVID. I hope that it will one day be held again in Ukraine.

For those of you who aren’t familiar with solving event procedures: You’ll need to set up these positions on a board. In solving events, you can use a chess set and you can move the pieces to try and help you solve. You solve against the clock; for these studies give yourself an average of 30 minutes for each one, so 120 minutes in total. Your solutions are marked by the competition’s supervisor. Points are awarded according to how much of the composer’s solution you find, with five points available for each study if you find it all. In the answers, I’ll show you where the points were awarded. You need to find the composer’s main line; you can also write down sidelines if you’re not sure what the main line is, but only the main line moves earn points. So look for the most artistic, elegant line.

Four gentle hints, if you want them: There’s a repeating manoeuvre in the Korolkov study. In the Bor/Herbstman, you need to get an advanced phalanx of pawns, even if it means sacrifices. A splendid first move in the Begley. “Passed pawns should be pushed.” - yes, but Polasek’s position is a study, and their immediate pushing would be a pushover…

The solutions are on page 319.

Openings for Amateurs

by Pete Tamburro; ptamburro@aol.com

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

There is an opening concept that has been practised since 1750, yet, even to this day, players of all stripes, including masters, manage to amuse us by falling into the same trap in its many variations.

It's known as Legal's Mate, and a game he played back in the 18th century is given below. What captured our attention were two things. First, there was the number of ways players have found to fall into it. Examples of this are given after our main game. Chess teachers, have fun with them!

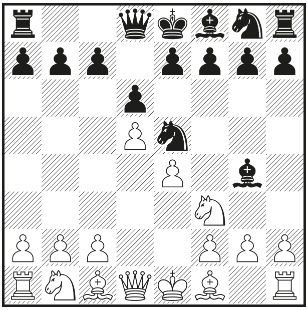
Secondly, when checking Chessbase, I found one fellow who seemed attached to playing the losing side and a 2300+ player who seemed quite unaware of the idea. That is our feature game.

Dmitry **Bocharov**– Ruslan **Musalov**

RUS-chT Rapid Sochi (1.4), 15.10.2021

1.d4 I run into this line playing on the ICC by means of this route: 1.e4 ♘c6 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 ♗g4 4.d5 ♘e5 5.♘xe5.

1...d6 2.♘f3 ♗g4 3.e4 ♘c6 4.d5 ♘e5

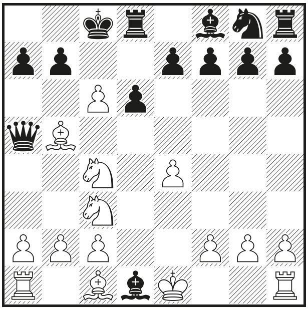


The number of people who play this astonishes me. It also violates Rule Number One in my book: Look for all checks, captures and forced moves. Rule Number Four is to look at your opponent's ability to do those things.

5.♘xe5 ♗xd1 6.♗b5+ c6 7.dxc6 ♕a5+?! Less drastic, but still bad is 7...a6 8.c7+ axb5 9.cxd8♕+ ♖xd8 10.♘xf7 ♔xf7 11.♔xd1 d5 and White is better in all these lines: 12.e5 *(12.exd5 ♖xd5+ 13.♔e2; 12.c3 dxe4+ 13.♔c2 ♘f6)*.

8.♘c3 0-0-0 In this entire disaster, Black might as well risk White not knowing about or finding this 9th move: 8...a6!? 9.b4!! ♕xb4 (9...♕d8 10.c7+ axb5 11.cxd8♕+ ♖xd8 12.♘xf7 ♔xf7 13.♔xd1 *(13.♘xd1 ♖c8 14.♘e3 ♘f6 15.f3 g6 16.a4 ♗g7 17.♗b2±)* 13...♘f6 14.f3 g5 *(14...♖c8 isn't good now because the king is defending c2.)*) 10.cxb7+ ♔d8 11.bxa8♕+ ♔c7 12.♕a7+ ♔c8 13.♗d7+ ♔d8 14.♘xf7# and there's no name to my knowledge of this mating pattern. I wonder if I can apply for a copyright?

9.♘c4



If you think about it, this is the next level of Legal's idea. Rather than a quick mate, we have a swarm of minor pieces taking over the game. It's a great lesson for young students of the game who are "queen-centric".

9...♕xc3+ 9...♕c7 10.♘d5 ♗xc2 *(Truly embarrassing is 10...♕b8 11.c7 ♕a8 12.♗d2 ♗g4 13.f3 ♗e6 14.♗a5 ♖d7 15.♘cb6+ axb6 16.♘xb6+)* 11.♘xc7 ♔xc7 12.cxb7 ♗xe4 13.♗e3 ♔b8 14.♘a5 ♗xb7 15.♗c6 ♗c8 16.♗f3 ♗d7 17.♖c1 ♖c8 18.0-0 e5 19.♖xc8+ ♔xc8 20.♖c1+ ♔d8 21.♘c6+ ♗xc6 22.♗xc6 g6 23.♗xa7 ♗h6 24.♖c4 ♘f6 25.a4+-.

10.bxc3 ♗xc2 11.f3 The game is quite over. It was a rapid game, so Black tries to run out the clock to no avail.

11...a6 11...bxc6 12.♗xc6 ♗d3 13.♘a5 g6 14.♗e3 ♗h6 15.♗xh6 ♘xh6 16.c4 ♔c7 17.♔d2+-.

12.♘b6+ ♔b8 13.♘d5 bxc6 14.♗xc6 ♖c8 15.♘b4 a5 16.♘a6+ ♔a7 17.♗b5 ♔b6 18.c4 ♗d3 19.♗e3+ ♔b7 20.♔d2 ♗xc4 21.♖ab1 ♗xb5 22.♖xb5+ Better was 22.a4.

22...♔c6 23.♖hb1 ♔d7 24.♖b7+ ♔e6 25.♘c7+ ♔f6 26.♘d5+ ♔g6 27.♖b8 ♖xb8 28.♖xb8 ♘h6 29.♘xe7+ ♔f6 30.♘d5+ ♔e6 31.g4 f6 32.♖b7 g5 33.♗d4 ♘g8 34.f4! ♗e7 35.fxg5 h5 36.♘xe7 It's mate in two after 36.g6 hxg4 *(36...f5 37.gxf5#)* 37.♘f4# Time was likely an issue.

36...♘xe7 37.♖xe7+ Nice finish!

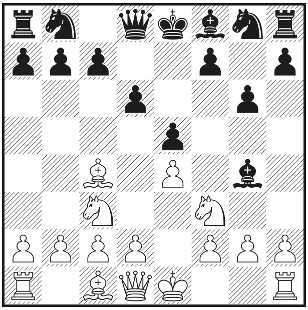
1-0

Legal - X

1750

From the Philidor Defence. This is usually presented as the original game with this idea.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♗c4 ♗g4 4.♘c3 g6



Before you think this game's insertion was unnecessary, be advised that the seven games with this line in Chessbase - all played by amateurs - had no ♘xe5 as their next move!

5.♘xe5 ♗xd1 6.♗xf7+

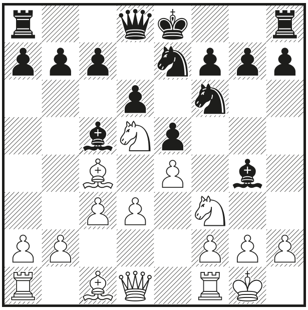
1-0

Pollack - Hall [C55]

Bradford, 1890

From a Four Knights' Game. This time ♗xf7+ isn't mate.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♗c4 ♘f6 5.0-0 d6 6.♘d5 ♗g4 7.c3 ♗c5 8.d3 ♘e7



9.♘xe5 ♗xd1 10.♘xf6+ gxf6 11.♗xf7+ ♔f8 12.♗h6#

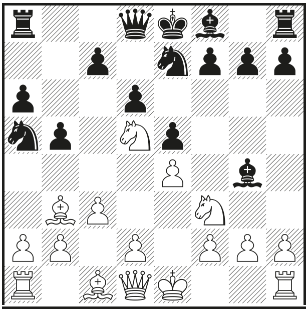
1-0

Berger - Frohlich [C62]

Graz, 1888

From a "no-name" Ruy Lopez defence. In this case, Black's defence would want to remain anonymous.

1.e4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3 d6 4.♗b5 ♗g4 5.♘d5 ♘ge7 6.c3 a6 7.♗a4 b5 8.♗b3 ♘a5



9.♘xe5 ♗xd1 10.♘f6+ gxf6 11.♗xf7#

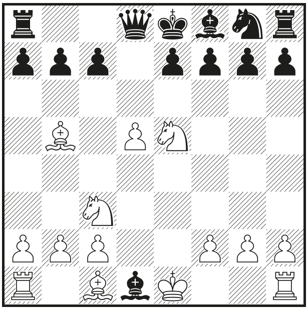
1-0

Mieses - Uhquist [B01]

Nuremberg, 1895

From a Scandinavian. Black again forgets the fatal ♗b5+.

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 ♕xd5 3.♘c3 ♕d8 4.d4 ♘c6 5.♘f3 ♗g4 6.d5 ♘e5 7.♘xe5 ♗xd1 8.♗b5+



8...c6 9.dxc6 a6 10.c7+ axb5 11.cxd8♕+ ♖xd8 12.♘xd1

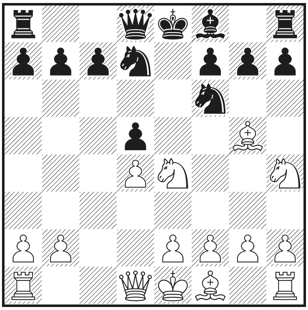
1-0

Spencer - Fairhurst [D00]

Tenby, 1928

From the off-beat Ruth Attack. This time it has a slight resemblance to the old Queen's Gambit trap with the ♗b4+.

1.d4 d5 2.♗g5 ♘f6 3.♘d2 ♗f5 4.c4 e6 5.♘gf3 ♘bd7 6.♘h4 ♗e4 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♘xe4



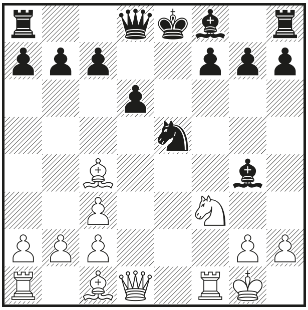
8...♘xe4 9.♗xd8 ♗b4+ 10.♕d2 ♗xd2+ 11.♔d1 ♖xd8 12.f3 ♗g5

0-1

J. Taubenhaus - Colchester [C30]

Paris Simul, 1887

1.e4 e5 2.f4 d6 3.♘f3 ♗g4 4.♗c4 ♘f6 5.fxe5 ♘xe4 6.♘c3 ♘xc3 7.dxc3 ♘c6 8.0-0 ♘xe5



From a King's Gambit. White naturally gets the king's rook to help out.

9.♘xe5 ♗xd1 10.♗xf7+ ♔e7 11.♗g5#

1-0

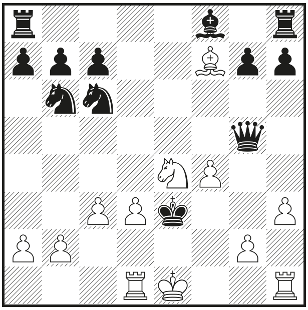
Vucinic - Djurovic [B02]

From an Alekhine's Defence. This time the king hunt goes all the way down to the other king's square!

1.e4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 d5 3.exd5 ♘xd5 4.♗c4 ♘b6 5.♗b3 ♘c6 6.♘f3 e5 7.d3 ♗g4 8.h3 ♗h5 9.♘xe5 ♗xd1 9...♕h4 10.g3 *(10.♘f3)* 10...♗xd1 11.gxh4 ♘xe5 12.♔xd1 0-0-0 13.♖g1±

10.♗xf7+ ♔e7 11.♗g5+ ♔d6 12.♘e4+ ♔xe5 13.f4+ ♔d4 13...♔f5 14.♘g3# A pure mate!

14.♖xd1 ♕xg5 15.c3+ ♔e3



16.0-0! ♕h4 16...♕h5 17.♗xh5 ♘d4 18.g3 ♘e2+ 19.♔h2.

17.♖f3+ ♔e2 18.♖d2+ ♔e1 19.♖f1#

1-0

I hope you enjoyed this little excursion into the history of this famous trap in all its different forms and hope you use it in your chess teaching. After 272 years, we should attempt to stop this sort of thing!

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS

This month's originals

A feature shared by our three two-movers is that in each case a white rook is lined up on the same rank as the black king with one or two pieces on the intervening squares. This feature should in each case lead you gently into the possibilities for thematic play. Our helpmate (two BWBWBW collaborative sequences that see Black mated) is from a contributor new to this column - welcome, Stano!

Which knight is it? (1)

In Kabe's two-mover, the point of the rook at a6 must be to threaten ♖xc6 mate after a white knight has been played to e7. If we try 1.♘de7, a number of black responses have interesting faults: 1…♔xc4 2.N♘e3; 1…♕a8 2.♘d6 (a change from ♕d4, which would have been the reply in the diagram position); and 1…♖xc4 2.♘g7. But 1…♕c3! (preparing 2…♔b4) is the refutation. So leave that knight on d5 (guarding b4) and play instead 1.♘fe7!. Now 1…♔xc4 again is met by 2.♘e3 (albeit it's the other knight this time), 1…♕a8 or …♕e8 fails to 2.Nb6 (another changed mate), 1…♖xc4 fails this time to 2.♘f6, and finally 1…♔d6 fails against the threatened mate, 2.♖xc6. Kabe sums up this very neat package: "half-battery" [i.e., the arrangement on the line c5-g5] "with changed mates. Flight-giving key" [i.e., d6 becomes accessible to the black king, which is not the case in the diagram or after the try 1.♘de7]. (It's always pleasing when the composer arranges matters so that the more attractive play - in this case, the king flight - takes place after the key, not the try.)

Which knight is it? (2)

Another coincidence this month is that in both the first two problems the nub of the solution is a choice as to which of White's knights are to go to the thematic square. In David's problem, we clearly want to blast open the fourth rank, and so the question this time is as to which white knight is to capture at d4. (By the way, note the nice point that in the diagram …gxf3 would fail against 2.♖xd4, a move that will be no longer possible after the try and the key.) Let us look first at 1.♘bxd4. This opens the line a5-d5, and so 1…gxf3 no longer unguards d5 and can be met by 2.♘e2 (reclaiming the knight's guard on c3). There are other moves that meet the twin threats of 2.♕d3 and 2.♖a4; but after 1…♘xc2 we have 2.♕b3 and after 1…♘c5 we have 2.♖xc5. However there is no mating response to 1…♘xa5, which is the refutation. So we turn to 1.N♘exd4, which has just the one threat, 2.♕c3. Now 1…gxf3 is met by 2.♘b3 (this time, White's move has opened the line g8-d5) and 1…♔c5 does not prevent 2.♕c3 from being mate. So 1.♘exd4 is indeed the key. A very nice thematic scheme!

Another very nice thematic scheme

In John's two-mover, White would like to give mate either by opening the battery on the third rank, moving the f3P to f4, or by playing ♘g4, but these moves both interfere on the h4-d4 line, allowing …♔xd4. In addition, ♘g4 would deprive the white bishop at d3 of its guard, permitting …♔xd3. In this context, note the provision made for moves by the c4 bishop. As such moves open the b4-d4 line, it seems that they will allow both f4# and ♘g4#; but after say 1…♗a6 White would have to play 2.f4 (to guard d3) and after 1…♗xd3 White would have to play 2.♘g4 (to maintain the white pawn's guard on e4). But to threaten mate White must move the queen away from b4, and the distinction

(See page 311)

between 2.f4 and 2.♘g4 as mating moves arises in different circumstances. First we try 1.♕b2, to threaten 2.♕d2 and 2.♕xe2. Now 1…♖c2 defends and fails only to 2.f4 while 1…♖xd3, the black rook's other defensive move, fails only to 2.♘g4. However, 1…♘e4! is the refutation. So the key is 1.♕b6!, threatening 2.♕h6, when we have 1…♘e6 2.f4; 1…♘xd3 2.♘g4 and in this case 1…♘e4 (which now opens the line b6-d4) 2.fxe4. In the set play, the try play and the post-key play a black piece (a different one each time) either captures at d3 or moves elsewhere, with the effect of differentiating White's mating responses.

… something completely different…

We round off with a helpmate which demonstrates two completely accurate (and congenially paired) lines of play using only six pieces. These lines of play (with Black moving first) are 1.♔f1 ♘f5 2.♗h2+ ♘g3+ 3.♔g1 ♗b6 and 1.K♔g3 ♘d3 2.♔h3 ♘f2+ 3.♔h2 ♗c7. (You may have noticed that this position could have been set as a helpmate in 2.5, with 1…♘f5 and 1…♘d3+ the opening moves, but I like the unique temporising black moves with which the solutions are introduced.)

SOLUTIONS TO ENDGAMES

(See page 312)

Korolkov

1.e5 ♗xe5+ 2.♔a2 (1 point) ♗d4 3.♗b3 (+1 point =2) ♔e4 4.♖a5 ♗c5 5.♗a4 (+1=3) ♔d5 6.♖a6 ♗b6 7.♖xb6 (+1=4) h1♕ 8.♗c6+ ♔c5 9.♗xh1 ♔xb6 10.h4 (+1=5) wins.

Bor & Herbstman

1.♘d7 ♖xd7 2.♗xf6 (1 point) ♔g6 3.dxe6 ♖xf7 4.e7 (+1 point = 2) ♔xf6 5.e8♕ ♖f8+ 6.♔h7 (+1=3) ♖h8+ 7.♕xh8 ♗xh8 8.♔h6 (+1=4) ♗g7+ 9.♔h5 (+1=5) draws.

Begley

1.♗g2 (1 point) ♕xf4 2.♗xb6+ (+1 point = 2) ♔b8 3.♗c7+ ♕xc7 4.♘a6+ (+1=3) ♔c8 5.♗h3+ (+1=4) ♔d8 6.♘xc7 ♔xc7 7.♔c3 ♔d6 8.♔d4 (+1=5) wins.

Polasek

1.e6 (1 point) dxe6 2.h6 (+1 point = 2) ♖h3+ 3.♔g1 ♖xh6 4.♖h2 (+1=3) ♖f6 5.♖g2+ (+1=4) ♔h~ 6.♖f2 ♖g6+ 7.♔h1 (+1=5) wins.

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